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LETTERS

OF THE

FIRST EARL OF MALMESBURY

HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS

VOL. II.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
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A SERIES OF

LETTERS

OF THE

FIRST EARL OF MALMESBURY

HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS

FROM

1745 TO 1820

EDITED, WITH NOTES &c., BY HIS GRANDSON

THE

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In Two Volumes

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Errata.

Page 435, 440, 455, *read* 'Guards' after Capt. G. Bowles.

Page 448, Note by the writer. The writer was Capt. Bowles, R.N., and the note by the Major.

Page 525. The foot note should have been a preface for the year.

LETTERS OF THE EARL OF MALMESBURY

AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

1800.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Spring Gardens, November 20, 1800.

I SHOULD not have written to you to-day, had I not received from Addington the two letters he mentioned to me yesterday. As he said I might communicate any part of them to you, I send you what I think is the cream of them. They are not what I first conjectured them to be, from a *French* correspondent, but from Col. Littlehals, and are more easily *skimmed* than one would have supposed. The first bears the date of the 10th inst., and contains the following curious account of Lord Cornwallis's[1] audience. 'Lord Cornwallis has had an audience with the first Consul that has been very satisfactory *to him*. I understand from his lordship, that Buonaparte was not only particular in his enquiries respecting His Majesty's health, but the manner in which he expressed his earnest hope that the King might continue well, and the gratification that he seemed to feel at hearing that His Majesty was

[1] Sent to Paris to negotiate for peace.

in a good state of health at present were peculiarly grateful to Lord Cornwallis.' He then gives a detailed account of the fête, observing that the good order kept was owing to the excellence of the police and the number of troops. He says, by *mistake* the coachman carried them over the Pont Royal through the crowd, yet not a disrespectful word was uttered, but every mark of civility was shown Lord C. The description is in all other respects similar to that given in the papers.

Reiterated shouts of 'vive Buonaparte,' 'vive le premier Consul,' were given when he appeared at the window. He adds, that the greatest *circumspection* and distrust manifests itself amongst all classes of people in their communication with one another; that the dress and manners of the men and women are indecent and vulgar in the extreme. The second letter is dated *the 13th inst.* He begins by saying that he has reason to think Lord Cornwallis's dispatch is of *too much consequence*, to allow him to trespass much on Mr. A.'s time. He gives a curious account of a dinner at Berthier's. All the principal generals were invited to meet Lord C. and his suite. He says the same distrust, jealousy, and want of confidence, seemed to reign amongst them. Colonel L. sat next Massena, whose observations to him he thus describes: 'He observed that he supposed I was informed of his having been solicited to command the expedition against England. He said he was glad the peace had put an end to it, but that he had no doubt that *with forty thousand men he must have succeeded*, although he had serious apprehensions from the deplorably feeble state of their navy of the possibility of disembarking half that number.

He added he felt happy, when he was appointed to the command, at the prospect of being opposed to a general "*si renommé et distingué* que Lord Cornwallis;" that the British were the bravest troops he had ever been engaged with; that at Toulon, where he had a command, they fought most gallantly, at that time he said *Buonaparte was under my immediate orders*, although circumstances had now *strangely* changed their respective positions. It is easy to discern that Massena is exceedingly dissatisfied with the present state of things, and with the rulers of the French Government in general, and with Buonaparte in particular.' I have sent you this letter almost *en entier*, he ends it with saying that Buonaparte seeing Lord Broome at the Théâtre Français seated opposite him, sent Lauriston to invite him to his own box, where he went and was received with the most marked and polite attention. I think one may see by all this that they wish to keep up appearances as well as possible. Massena's speech was, though not taken as such, in my eyes, a bit of a *persiflage*. There is not a word of what would be *most interesting*, the object of their going to Paris, which however is evidently referred to when he mentions the dispatch.

POLITICAL SKETCH (FRAGMENT) IN 1801, BY LORD MALMESBURY, ON THE TREATY OF LUNEVILLE[1] BETWEEN FRANCE AND AUSTRIA, WRITTEN FOR THE CABINETS.

Austria has now signed an inglorious treaty of peace, and England at last stands singly opposed to the whole

[1] This treaty, signed between the French Republic and Austria on February 9, 1801, extended that of Campo Formio, and gave to France the Rhine as its boundary, and Venice and the ecclesiastical states of Germany to Austria.

power of France, a power great in itself, but which has acquired additional strength from the extent of territories now ceded to it by the Emperor. From the line of conduct the other European States have thought proper to follow, some from passion and folly, others from a dread of the French arms or prevalence of French intrigue, and all from the baneful progress Jacobinical doctrines have made in their Governments, they have deserted the system which has so long preserved to them their religious and political independence, and united themselves with France for the avowed purpose of crushing or depressing the British Empire. Yet formidable as this mass of power may appear, the British Empire has nothing to fear, and everything to hope, if England feels clearly and justly the great and noble causes for which she is contending, and calls forth with becoming spirit and energy her vast resources in the defence of it. To do this she must not perplex her system, and thus weaken or palsy her exertions, by any misconception as to the primary cause and ultimate object of this confederacy against her. She must never forget that it is the work of France, having for its end the destruction or abasement of this country. Had no such question as the rights of neutral nations ever been agitated, still it would have been formed; and were we to concede to all the wild inadmissible claims these neutral nations bring forward, it still would be maintained. The favourers and admirers of French principles, the opposers of government, the timid and despondent wishers for a premature peace on any terms may indulge their leanings, their spleen, and their errors by crediting or affecting to credit the contrary; but

such persons deceive themselves, or have it in their views to mislead others.

The armed neutrality in 1780, the nonsensical fiction of a visionary primitive code with all the absurdity which surrounded the origin of that preposterous transaction, was the work of a deep and dextrous intrigue conducted by a crafty, exasperated, and vindictive minister to prevent Russia from declaring, as she was at that moment disposed to do, in favour of England, then at war with France and Spain and the rebellious American Colonies. He and the other framers of it neither knew or cared about neutral rights; Russia, where the measure first took shape, had no active trade or trading vessels. The Empress acceded to it from a total ignorance to what it was to lead, and this ignorance was so complete that she was brought to believe that in the event it might be even beneficial to Great Britain. But its principles having once been admitted by her, the framers of the measure well knew how to work on her character. The most fulsome adulation induced her to persist and support with inflexibility a measure she had adopted carelessly, and without any comprehension of its drift.

The armed neutrality owed its origin to cunning and flattery, practising on new conceptions. It owes its revival to the same causes, practising on a distempered mind under the dominion of anger and arrogance. At neither period can it with any degree of fairness or justice be attributed to the misconduct of His Majesty's Ministers either at home or abroad, it arose each time from events which could not be foreseen, and which if they had been foreseen could not have been prevented.

It made part of that invariable system of persevering hostility which France, whether monarchical or republican, always had pursued against the welfare, the interests, and the glory of this country. But while we abstain from accusing past ministers wrongfully, let us be careful not to fall into a still more dangerous error and maintain a belief that there does exist a present or may exist a ministry, who by wise negotiation, justifiable concession, or temperate explanation, can dissolve or annihilate this Northern confederacy in its present state, and leagued in the way and for the purpose it is. Were the ostensible and real causes of its formation one and the same, this might be done, and the attempt ought certainly to be made; if each member of the neutral league acted on their own distinct and immediate interest, they might be wrought upon by an appeal to these interests, but acting as they manifestly do, under the impulsion of France, given with a design the most destructive to this country, to attempt a compromise or to parley with them would only tend to increase their confidence and presumption, and leave them room to suppose England was shrinking from the danger, and deficient in means or wanting in spirit to resist.

Let therefore this preposterous gigantic confederacy take its course, let its formation be completed, and then let a trial by combat and no other trial decide on the question.[1]

A belief prevailed in old times that in this mode of trial victory constantly declared itself on the side of right. If we reject this belief even in its full extent, let us at least admit the sound and religious presumption

[1] The event proved the truth of this opinion.

on which it was originally founded, and let our minds be strongly impressed with the conviction that the fighting in a just and good cause ever promises a prosperous result, that it must add to the courage and confidence of a brave and virtuous people called upon to defend themselves and their country against the aggression of a motley association of envy, anger, weakness, and rapacity; and should it be the will of Providence that in this great conflict we fail, the consolation of having done our duty will at least give us that manly and becoming acquiescence in this its decree which can only be felt by minds which have acted conscientiously and rightly.

LORD FITZHARRIS[1] TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Berlin, July 7, 1801.

The following account has been received within these few days at the Foreign Office. In the morning of the day that Paul died, he sent for Pahlen and said, 'I suspect you are like the rest, I think there is some design against me. I do not like the intimacy between my sons and the Souboffs. Pahlen answered, my life is always in your hands, you ought not to doubt my fidelity. I will try it, said the Emperor; I desire you to give orders to the two generals who command my guards, to have their regiments ready to turn out at a moment's notice, from ten o'clock at night, till seven in the morning.' Pahlen retired, and went immediately to the Souboffs and those concerned, and said, the

[1] Lord Fitzharris was at this time secretary to Lord Pelham at the Board of Trade.

Emperor suspects something, if a blow is to be struck no time must be lost, it must be done to-night. I have just received such and such orders from him, and shall give the orders I have received from the Emperor to the two Generals. They then settled that the business should be done that evening, and went to the present Emperor to inform him of the necessity there was for Paul's abdicating the Crown. It is believed they said nothing of his death. At ten at night Paul sent for Pahlen, and told him he still suspected him. Pahlen denied the charge. I will try you, said the Emperor. Tell the two Generals of my guards to come in—they entered. He then asked them whether they had had any orders from Pahlen? and what they were? On their saying they had, and repeating the orders, the Emperor turned to Pahlen and said, I believe you to be my friend, I shall go to bed and will not be disturbed on any account to-night. At half-past eleven, Pahlen, Valerian, and Plato Souboff, Tartaranoff and another came to the Emperor's door (after stabbing the sentinel in their way). They knocked and said they must be admitted. He refused to open the door; they said dispatches of the last importance had just been received from Buonaparte, and they should be compelled to force it. The Emperor put on his clothes, and took two drawn swords under his arm. As he came to the door they had forced it. He struck at the first man, Valerian, Souboff seized his sword and gave him with the hilt a blow on his right arm by which he fractured it. It was then the noise began—the Emperor shrieked, jumped from the sofas to the chairs and became so furious and active, that the struggle lasted three quarters of an hour.

Pahlen and Plato Souboff were so shocked with the scene that they retired to a window. Souboff at last seized a small marble column lying on the table (used for laying on paper) and struck the Emperor on the temple, he fell immediately, and then they strangled him with his own scarf. There ends this tragical history! I have, I believe, already said that Alexander is acquitted of having had any knowledge of the transactions of his father's murderers—it is a foul business after all.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Whitehall, October 2, 1801.

My dear Father,—I refer you to the papers for the Gazette which contains but four lines stating the Preliminaries to have been signed last night by M. Otto[1] and Lord Hawkesbury. I know nothing, as I have not been able to see Lord Pelham himself, nor shall I, I'm afraid, be able to tell you much to-morrow, as Elliot dines with us at Putney. The measure of publishing the signature of the preliminaries before the ratification is in my opinion highly impolitic, and may prove very pernicious to us. Buonaparte will have felt our pulse, he will know how extravagant and even unnatural for *Englishmen* the joy is that is shown in London on the occasion, 'people embracing one another, groups everywhere assembled

[1] Otto, Count of Mosloy, negotiated the Treaty of Amiens with Lord Hawkesbury, afterwards Earl of Liverpool, and Prime Minister from 1812 to 1828. It was little better than a truce made by Napoleon for the purpose of reorganizing his artillery.

Mr. Pitt, who had been Prime Minister since 1784, acceding to the wish for peace, resigned his office to Mr. Addington on July 30, 1801.

discussing the matter (a very revolutionary topic), and the language of the common people in the midst of their joy highly seditious;' may he not waver before he puts pen to paper.

Inclosed in Lord Pelham's own writing.

Menou offered to surrender on August 26, therefore Egypt is ours.

An armistice of three days, or as proposed, to arrange matters, and acceded to by General Hutchinson, who writes this by Lord Elgin.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Durnford, October 12, 1801.

My dear Father,—The preliminaries of peace are first given to us in the *French papers*, and an *aide-de-camp* of *Buonaparte* is *suffered to land*, and is (shame on us) drawn about the streets of *London* by an *English populace*. I could not believe this till I opened Sir G. Shee's letter, which I send you as a proof of it. I see an article stating Egypt shall be *restored* to the Porte as if still possessed by France. Hostilities cease, I see, immediately. I never thought it could have been so bad. The drawing Buonaparte's aide-de-camp about will, viewing it in a *political light*, *do good*, it must produce disgust, and will raise peoples' fears; it is very opposite to what a Vienna or a Naples populace would have done. I'm rejoiced I was not in town.

Letter enclosed.

SIR GEORGE SHEE TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

London, October 10, 1801.

I send you the extraordinary Gazette which contains the only important intelligence of the Peace. I have been shocked at the depravity and meanness of my countrymen (I mean your Lordship's)[1] this morning. One of Buonaparte's aide-de-camps who was, I believe, taken for his brother, was drawn in a hackney coach by the mob from Oxford Street to St. James's Street, and from Downing Street to the Admiralty through the Park.

EXTRAIT D'UNE LETTRE À LORD MALMESBURY DE MEMEL.[2]

Mardi, 14 Juillet, 1802.

J'ai été dans le cas de voir le Roi et la Reine de Prusse de près et seuls, et ce que j'ai appris à cette occasion de la dureté des propos de Buonaparte (bien qu'ils ne m'ayent guère étonné ni surpris) a surpassé mon attente de beaucoup.

Le Général ou Maréchal Kalkreuth, vieux flagorneur des François, a fait venir la Reine à Tilsit en imaginant que Buonaparte, par égard pour une femme dans le malheur, la ménageroit un peu. Il lui a souri le premier jour mais peu après son naturel a repris le dessus, et il lui a dit les choses les plus cruelles. Toutes les affaires ont été négociées entre les deux Empereurs sans aucune intervention quelconque de leurs Ministres.

[1] Sir George Shee was an *Irishman*, and an intimate friend of Lord Palmerston, who in 1832 made him Minister at the Court of Berlin, and afterwards at Stutgard.

[2] From Lord Granville Leveson Gower.

Alexandre a fait des phrases sans jamais se souvenir de ses alliés et les comprendre dans son armistice.

Le Roi de Prusse s'est bien montré, a témoigné son mécontentement, et a fini par une scène très-vive avec Buonaparte, qui, dans un moment d'aimable abandon, a avoué ne connoître que deux sentimens, ceux de la haine et de la vengeance. Il a dit en face à la Reine et au Roi qu'ils n'oublient pas qu'ils étoient hors d'état de négocier, qu'il vouloit abaisser la Prusse, et garder Magdebourg pour pouvoir entrer à Berlin quand bon lui sembleroit, et il finit par dire: 'Je sens qu'à l'avenir il doit y avoir une haine implacable contre nous de la part des Prussiens, mais je veux et dois les mettre hors d'état de me nuire.'

You may depend upon all this, as if you had heard it yourself. I had it from their Majesties' own mouth. J'ai exagéré dans ma lettre précédente les pertes du Roi. La Silésie lui reste ainsi que les anciennes possessions prussiennes. Il cède les acquisitions polanaises. Benningsen a cédé le commandement à Buxhowden. Quelques personnes s'attendent à du bruit en Russie, de la part de l'armée mécontente, de la manière dont la paix s'est faite. Les cordons de la Légion d'honneur et de Saint André ont été échangés entre l'Empereur Alexandre, son frère Constantin (qui s'est indignement conduit pendant cette campagne), Budberg et le Prince Labanow d'un côté, et Buonaparte, Jérôme, Talleyrand et Bertier de l'autre. Outre cela, Buonaparte a attaché de ses propres mains la petite croix de la Légion d'honneur au premier grenadier de la garde, Presbraschinsky, sous les armes à Tilsit vis-à-vis celles des François.

Dans leurs promenades à cheval Alexandre et le Roi de Prusse suivent comme des aides-de-camp. Tous les ports de la Baltique vont être fermés, et depuis qu'à Königsberg les François ont saisi toutes les marchandises étant propriétées danoises, on s'attend à pis encore. La Galicie est en insurrection, et les Autrichiens s'y renforcent, tandis que les divisions Molitor et Bonet y sont déjà aux frontières.

The following letter was written by Lord Malmesbury to his son, upon his intimating to him that he intended to resign office, and no longer occupy himself with public affairs, but with literature and the pursuits of a country life. I publish it because it appears to me to be of general application.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

December 8, 1805.

The conversation which passed between us on Sunday November 17, my dear James, must necessarily have left on the minds of us both, a wish for further explanation.

It has, I confess, dwelt constantly and seriously on mine, and unless the affection I profess for you as my son was insincere, or the duties imposed on me as your father were such as could be dispensed with, it could not be otherwise.

It is with pleasure and with pride, that I can assert, you never from your infancy either angered or displeased me, ever gave me the remotest cause for wishing you better *morally constituted* than you are.

You have indeed, sometimes vexed and made me

sorry, but vexed and sorry on your account, from my observing that the very circumstances which I had hoped and expected would have contributed to your comfort and happiness, were, from the manner in which you viewed them, precisely those that interfered with both.

There can be no other rule for determining what constitutes *well being* in this world as far as relates to externals (bona externa) than the general one on which at all times, thinking and reasonable men have made human happiness depend, where they are concerned; and it is not a very unfair conclusion to suppose that he who deviates from this received opinion, is likely to err and to mistake his way as far as he is in search of such happiness.

It was on this particular point, my dear James, you will recollect our conversation turned.

You inclined to forego all these *bona externa*, which wisdom and experience, have, in all ages and in all countries, considered not only highly creditable and to be desired, but at the same time, as in their effects, the most conducive to that species of happiness of which we were speaking; public service both in Parliament and in office, pre-eminence of situation, connection with the leading persons in the country, (consequently their good will), *all* which you have been so fortunate as to attain without any effort or trouble, and at an unusually early period of life; partly I gladly acknowledge from your own excellent character, but partly also, you will I am sure readily acknowledge, from the favourable position into which you were thrown.

That *some* drawbacks should attach to such singular benefits I admit; but you are surely not yet to learn that *no* advantage *can* exist without its drawbacks, and from the intimate knowledge I have of your real character and genuine feelings I will take upon me to foretell with prophetic certainty, that were you to relinquish the distinguished situation you now stand in, with all its surrounding *agréments*, and by a hasty act of your own sink into unemployed, unnoticed existence, the regrets at the loss of the prize you would have thus voluntarily flung away, would be infinitely beyond and very different from those you now experience from being occasionally debarred of recreations, perfectly natural indeed, and to enjoy which you have the fairest claim, but which from the particular circumstances of the moment are not compatible with your official attendance.

You will perhaps be inclined to allege, why must the result of renouncing Parliament and office be such as is described? The answer is—that if *I your father*, full of affection for you, full of indulgence, knowing the rectitude of your heart and mind, of course eager to seek an apology for you, could not with all these partialities so powerfully assisting me, find *any one single legitimate excuse* for the step you meditate, how is it to be expected that your friends, your common acquaintance, and much less *the many* will not condemn you, and unable to account for it on any justifiable or comprehensible grounds, suffer you to join unmolested that inglorious herd.

When I say this, let me remind you that I am not talking in extremes, that I am not an advocate for that

inordinate ambition which leads sometimes to heroic deeds, but oftener to great crimes; or for that baser species of ambition, whose aim is power, wealth, and patronage; but for that governable, temperate ambition which excites in us an emulation to preserve and maintain honourably and becomingly the station in which we are placed, to act up to its standard, to keep pace *at least*, if not to surpass, our equals by the practice of worthy means for worthy ends, and thus affords us *reputation* and *occupation*, two of the most never failing ingredients to procure us content and self-approbation in this life.

Were all those who came before you into it passed by, had you no one by the side of you, or none to follow you, were you a complete insulated being, without connections of any kind, and as your ingenious colleague once pronounced himself to be 'a single pin in the universe,' still such a mode of life would be the most preferable one for you to adopt, since it is the one the most consonant to our nature, and which unquestionably offers the fairest chance of avoiding the *tædium vitæ* of the present, and also of enabling us at the latter end of our days to look at the past with satisfaction and without shame, and to contemplate with cheerfulness and without dismay the future.

But you, fortunately, are not this solitary being, you have filial, fraternal, and I trust will have conjugal and paternal affections to exercise. Towards *you* as to the head of the family and its stock all these different connections and ramifications point, and from you, will they, as long as they exist, claim and expect to derive all the comforts of secure and confidential sympathy,

of cheerful and companionable intercourse as well as protection and support, not out of your patrimony, but from your domestic habits and affections, and from that degree of consequence and consideration your rank entitles you to, and which for their sake as well as for your own, you are bound not to forfeit.

Were you a *novus homo*, the independent unassisted maker of your own fortune, your principles are too right, your understanding too correct, not to acknowledge this to be a paramount and pleasing duty, and I am confident, my dear James, it will impress itself as such still more forcibly on your mind when you reflect that you yourself are at this hour enjoying the fruits of the labours of *two* generations; that had their conduct been different, your situation would have been very different. And be assured that the best return you can make them, the most grateful tribute you can bestow on their memory is by exerting yourself for those who are to follow you in a way similar to that they have done for those who were to follow them.

To say, as you intimated, that the family is already raised high enough, may perhaps, as far as mere titles and honours go, be true; but recollect high distinctions require proportionate exertions. Those titles and honours are much too fresh in the family for us to presume on them, or to imagine that they will maintain themselves by their own weight.

Your *disposition and temper* you affirm are averse to the life I recommend, and lean to one of ease and retirement. Without entering into a useless discussion as to which is the preferable one, my reply to this is, that being left *free agents* as far as relates to disposition and

temper, we shall be made responsible and called to account for the consequences arising from our direction and government of them. Remember Cicero says 'Fortunam a Diis petendam, a Scipione sumendam esse sapientiam.' Remember also the *animus æquus* of Horace, both mean the same thing, the maintaining the dominion of the mind. This is also the very essence of the precept of revealed religion, enforced in every page of its writings; and that we are not permitted to live with impunity a life of stagnation, but called upon *to act* and to endeavour to meliorate our condition, be it what it will, is expressly commanded, and finely illustrated in the parable of the unprofitable servant and his talent.

Those imaginary beings which the ancients styled *Gods* and whom we more properly call *Fortune*, have distributed to you with a very liberal hand the goods within their reach, the *bona externa*. Says Terence with great truth—

Qui uti scit, ei *bona*, illi qui non utitur rectè *mala*.

As is said before, for the right use not only of the gifts bestowed on you by *fortune*, but also for the right management of those high benefits you owe to God you are left a *free agent*. Everything therefore rests on a nice exercise of this free agency—in other words on *yourself*. It is with you as with him who has the best watch Mudge or Tompion ever made. To go and to mark the hour, *it must be wound up*.

Here the possessor, not the maker, becomes accountable if it fails.

My wishes, my anxiety to see you happy; the wishes

and anxieties of your dearest relations, my advice, the use of my experience, the stating to you the opinion of the world, its consequences if slighted, its value if preserved, all will avail nothing, if you fail towards yourself.

That you should see this, my dear James, in its strongest light; that you should be admonished in time, and that by one who can have no interest separate from your interest, is the object of this letter. You cannot mistake its motive, it cannot displease you, because it contains no reproach or blame, and of my affection you cannot entertain a doubt.

I shall conclude it with a few general maxims, which as they arise out of what I have written, and are peculiarly applicable to the doctrine it enforces, I *earnestly* recommend to your most deliberate attention.

Remember you are not left in a fatherless world, but under the care of the best and wisest of beings. That if you believe this, you will admit there is no such thing as *unnecessary* evil in the universe, since if there were, then would the dilemma take place concerning the goodness and wisdom of the Supreme Being, *aut volens nequit aut potens non vult*, both of which are impious.

That if the proportion of *good* was not infinitely greater than of that we term *evil*, the world organised as it is could not exist.

Remember that religion and virtue are given, not to render you fortunate, but to bear misfortune with equanimity; not to render you opulent, but to bear poverty with content; not to render you healthful, but

to bear sickness with fortitude; to support adversity, and to enjoy prosperity, equally and wisely.

If after balancing the good and the bad, you should be so craving a reckoner as not to deem the distribution most equitable, and such as calls for the warmest gratitude towards Him who dispenses both, receive at least the bad as inevitably ordained by Him for purposes you are bound to respect, and as forming a part of that system which guides and supports the universe, *and from which you cannot escape.*

Thus ends my sermon; but not my love and affection for you, my dear James; these only end when I end.

Your affectionate father,

MALMESBURY.

This letter effected its object for a time, but after 1807 Lord Fitzharris passed a retired life at Heron Court, occupying himself with field sports, study, and, after his wife's death in 1815, with the education of his children. Later in life, he took a part in the debates of the House of Lords and died September 10, 1841.

The peace of Amiens, signed in 1802, had turned out to be practically a truce. Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor in May 1804, and Mr. Pitt resumed office as Premier in the same month. In October 1805, Lord Nelson destroyed the French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar. During that year an immense French army threatened us with an invasion from Boulogne, but was finally directed upon Germany. On December 2, Napoleon gained the battle of Austerlitz; new dynasties were created by him during 1806, and all the states of Europe, excepting England, lost battle after

battle. Mr. Pitt died in January 1806, and was succeeded by 'all the Talents,' Lord Grenville being Prime Minister.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.[1]

Park Place, July 22, 1806.

The accounts from Russia are what was to be expected. France rejected all *joint* negotiation for peace, calling it *une négociation duelle.* Alexander affected to be angry at this, and ordered M. Czartoryski to declare to Lord G. Leveson[2] that he never would make a separate peace, yet —— you see is gone on, and in addition R—— in confidence tells me that Russia has declared her intention to adopt a temporising system (that is to say be at war and not fight in the best sense of the term), alleging for reason that if she did otherwise, Austria and the Turks would be forced to declare for Buonaparte, and Prussia be supported by them. It was against Prussia Fox urged the Emperor Alexander to act in some of the best written dispatches possible. All this is very lamentable, the more so as it is likely to be followed up by quite a new ministry in Russia. Czartoryski and Kotousoff having said they would resign, and a Baron Budberg is to be at the head of Foreign Affairs.

[1] Lord Fitzharris was member for Helstone from 1801 to 1806, a Lord of the Treasury in 1803, during Mr. Pitt's Government, and Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1807, under the Duke of Portland's Administration, Canning being Foreign Minister.

[2] Afterwards Earl Granville, and Ambassador at Paris.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

St. Veit,[1] September 6, 1806.

I have a very pretty bit of ship news to tell, which really gave me as much pleasure as a victory. You will recollect my having mentioned in a former letter, Captain Proby's being taken by the treachery of the people of a small Roman port near Pesaro on the Adriatic; this no sooner came to Lord Keith's ears than he sent the 'Corso' sloop of war and a cutter, who burnt thirteen ships laying in the port, and destroyed the port itself, a most just vengeance on those rascally Italians, and proof of our power of avenging an injury done to an English officer. The Emperor set off for the army on the Inn to-day; a fine spirited conduct, certainly the wisest and best to be pursued at such a conjuncture. Lord Nelson and the Hamiltons[2] dined here the other day; it is really disgusting to see her with him, but he personally is not changed; open and honest, not the least vanity about him; he gave us a short account of the Battle of Aboukir. He says:—'When I saw them I could not help popping my head every now and then out of window (although I'd a d—d toothache), and once as I was observing their position I heard two seamen quartered at a gun near me, talking, and one said to the other "D—n them, look at them, there they are, Jack, if we don't beat them they will beat us;"' he says, 'I knew what stuff I had under me, so I went into the attack with only a few ships, perfectly sure the others would follow me;

[1] In Austria. [2] Sir William and the celebrated Lady Hamilton.

although it was nearly dark and they might have had every excuse for not doing it, yet they all in the course of two hours *found a hole to poke in at.*' 'If,' added he, 'I had taken a fleet of the same force from Spithead, I should sooner have thought of flying than attacking the French in their position, but I knew my Captains, nor could I say which of them distinguished himself most.' He looks very well but seems to be in no hurry to sail again.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

St. Veit, September 10, 1806.

I am just returned with Gilbert[1] from a chase at Prince Esterhazy's, and found a servant going to England. We have been there three or four days, and were received in the kindest and most hospitable manner possible. On Sunday we had in the evening a grand firework. On Monday, which was her *jour de fête*, there was a very good ball, and yesterday the *chasse*. Nelson and the Hamiltons were there; we never sat down to dinner or supper less than sixty or seventy persons, in a fine hall, superbly illuminated; in short the whole in a most princely style. Nelson's health was drank with a flourish of trumpets and firing of cannon. Lady Hamilton is without exception the most coarse, ill-mannered, disagreeable woman I ever met with. The Princess with great kindness had got a number of musicians, and the famous Haydn, who is in their service, to play, knowing Lady Hamilton was fond of music. Instead of attending to them she sat down to the Faro table, played Nelson's cards for him,

[1] Lord Minto's eldest son.

and won between 300*l.* and 400*l.* He told me he had *no thoughts of serving again*, in short I could not disguise my feeling, and joined in the general abuse of her. The following is the list of what was killed (at the *chasse*) and in three hours, for the rain obliged us to leave off an hour and a half sooner than was intended: 63 hares, 3 pheasants, 622 partridges, 25 quails; total 703. There is going to be an 'insurrection' or levy *en masse*, in Hungary, which will form in about three weeks an army of 40,000 men. Eighteen Generals have been pensioned, that is disgraced, in the two armies; but all this is too late; next week will probably bring us interesting news. I wish we could infuse a little English spirit here, for the language of those whose example is of the greatest consequence is the weakest and most detestable possible. You may easily imagine that till I know the events resulting from the recommencement of hostilities, that I shall not quit this place, indeed, as I have invitations from Prince Schwartzenberg and Prince Esterhazy for next month, I don't much think I shall go at all.

1807.

On the 25th of March, 1807, the Duke of Portland's Administration succeeded Lord Grenville's. Lord Eldon was Lord Chancellor, Mr. Perceval being Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Canning Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and Lord Castlereagh for War and the Colonies. At the end of the year Russia and Austria joined Napoleon against us, after we had saved the Danish fleet by force from the grip of Napoleon, to whom it had been prospectively delivered by the Treaty of Tilsit.

EXTRACT FROM LORD FITZHARRIS'S JOURNAL.

On the 25th March, 1807, the day on which the Portland Administration was formed, I was called on to make my option between a seat in the Treasury and the Under Secretaryship of the Foreign Office, then in the hands of Mr. Canning. I did not hesitate to select the latter, under one whom I had long known as an intimate friend of my family, and whose brilliant talents had always called for my admiration. I found him a most kind-hearted and agreeable man to act under, never saw him discomposed, and ever with astonishment viewed the labour he bestowed on his duties, and the rapidity and ability with which he executed them.

MR. ROSS[1] TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Sunday, July 12, 1837.

All our hopes of any favourable result from the Armistice are at an end. From accounts received this morning we learn that another battle took place on the 18th, in which there was much hard fighting, but which terminated indecisively. Buonaparte twice made proposals for an Armistice and was as often refused, at length the evil genius of Europe in the person of the Grand Duke Constantine (and a more appropriate representative he could not have) supplicated the Emperor Alexander to agree to it, founding his entreaties on the waste of human blood, and the sufferings of thousands of his wounded soldiers. Thus was the Armistice agreed to—since which time His Imperial Majesty the King of Prussia and Buonaparte have met several times at Tilsit, and the former has written a letter to the Prince of Mecklenburgh, under date of the 29th ult., from Tilsit, that 'depuis l'heureux rapprochement entre lui et l'Empereur' he had obtained from the latter the assurance that the Prince's territories should be safe.

The Russian fleet has defeated that of the Turks; the revolution at Constantinople is entirely in favour at the French interest, it does not appear that the Russians took any ships.

[1] Mr. Ross was now private secretary to Mr. Canning. He had held that post under Lord Malmesbury for many years, to whom he was desired by Mr. Canning to send all the proceedings of the Foreign Office.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 21, 1807.

A letter from Adair[1] received on Sunday said that Austria is now determined to join us, provided Russia did not listen to peace and that Count Strotherheim was going immediately to the Russian Head Quarters.

In a postscript Mr. Adair added 'that he had just learnt the Armistice.' This would of course put an end to the tardy determination of Austria—her *agonies* would then begin.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 22, 1807.

Private accounts received this morning say that peace between Russia and France was signed the 8th, and ratified the 9th, and between France and Prussia on the latter day.

Our fleet, which it becomes every day more necessary to have in the Baltic, will have sailed this morning from Yarmouth, if this easterly wind should not have pre vented it.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 23, 1807.

Mr. McKenzie arrived from Memel about an hour ago. He left it on the 4th, he may bring perhaps some interesting details of what followed the conclusion of the Armistice, but the date of his departure will show he could not bring anything concerning the Treaty.

[1] Sent by Mr. Fox the year before as Minister to St. Petersburg.

I fancy the Russian Ministers will be shy of making any communication to Lord G. L. Gower[1] on this subject, till the shame of their master was signed and sealed. Lord G. L. Gower continued *at Memel*; this is all I have yet heard, but I augur ill from it. Lord Fitzharris has just been with me, he says Lord G. L. G. could not do otherwise than remain at Memel '*that everything is worse than bad.*'

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 23, 1807.

The messenger Sylvester arrived at midnight last night, bringing with him dispatches from Stralsund of the 15th and from Memel of the 12th inst. The King of Sweden has retired into Stralsund, after a narrow escape of being taken prisoner. He had asked for an armistice, which Buonaparte had refused in the haughty way a Frenchman flushed with success might be supposed to do. Pierrepoint has been doing very well; he has been endeavouring to reconcile the King of Sweden to the recall of our troops if it should become necessary, and it was in this sense Mr. Canning wrote to him a week back. But all this is trifling to what we hear from Memel. His Imperial Majesty was to be at Riga on his way to St. Petersburg on the 14th. He left Tilsit without Lord Gower's being informed of his intention to return home, no communication has been made to him of the terms of the treaty, nor even to Prussia; the two Emperors settled it themselves. All that Alexander told the King of Prussia was, that the engagements he had entered into relative to the Baltic

[1] Our Envoy at St. Petersburg, afterwards Lord Granville.

Ports were the most onerous. Lord Gower supposes that Russia will have her indemnification on the side of Turkey, and Buonaparte also, by means of the Emperor. The latter wished His Imperial Majesty to take the country as far as the Vistula, telling him it was the natural boundary of his Empire, but it was refused. Prussia loses the greater part, if not the whole, of east and south Prussia. Dantzic is to be declared free, with two German miles of territory. The King of Prussia hoped to have got less hard terms by sending for the Queen. She went, spoke with dignity, spirit, and feeling, but nothing could move the savage, or extort anything from him but an unmeaning compliment on her beauty and the elegance of her dress. Saxony is to be largely augmented. All this is very bad, but what follows is worse I think. Alexander has accepted the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, with Constantine, Budberg, Kurckin and Labanoff. Buonaparte, Berg, Berthier, and Talleyrand have the Order of St. Andrew. A loss of territory may be recovered, but a Sovereign cannot regain his honour. The officers and troops (according to Sir R. Wilson) hung their heads when they saw their Sovereign thus insulted. Lord Gower seems to think that if the offered mediation does not end in peace between us and France, we may look for the hostility of Russia.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 24, 1807.

The Swedes have been driven into Stralsund. It is difficult to say whether Austria was sincere or not, at

all events she will have incurred the hazard of a bold policy, without the advantage she might have derived from the adopting it sooner. I have just learnt that we have, by the arrival of yesterday, a note from Budberg to Lord F. L. Gower, in answer to a very proper one from his lordship, which for five sides of paper, contains nothing but reproaches on our conduct and that of Austria, unfortunately many of them too well founded by the conduct of our predecessors. It concludes with a *néanmoins* that His Imperial Majesty is willing to offer his mediation for peace, which he is *sure* will be accepted. The answer intended to be sent to this, is, I believe, that we must first know the terms of the treaty concluded at Tilsit.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 25, 1807.

Count Bentinck has been with me again to-day and has seen Mr. Canning. I find he had a double object in coming over to this country. One is about his own interests at Varel and the other a nibbling at peace. His story to me is that when he applied at the Hague for a passport to go to Tonningen, which is understood there as meaning to go to England, Verhuel sent for him and said, 'mais quand vous serez en Angleterre ne pouvez-vous tâcher de rapprocher la France et l'Angleterre? nous le désirons vivement.' He says he brought over with him a passport from *King Louis* to enable him to go to Buonaparte's head-quarters, in the event of his having anything to communicate after having *sounded* this Government. I have not, nor

shall not, mention it to Lord Fitzharris, because he will surely learn it from Mr. Canning, but I cannot have the same reserve with your lordship, you know better than any one how to appreciate this indirect proposal and how far the person employed is a fit agent in such a business. The Baltic fleet was to sail this morning.

EXTRACT FROM LORD FITZHARRIS'S JOURNAL.

That masterstroke of bold, and, as circumstances developed themselves, of perfectly justifiable policy, was made during the period of my belonging to the Foreign Office, namely, the seizure and saving from the grasp of France the powerful navy of Denmark, comprehending 18 sail of the line.

The *morality* of the proceeding, strongly questioned at the time, has been fully justified by the exposure of the secret article of the Treaty of Tilsit that assigned the Danish Navy to Russia and France, or rather to Napoleon, who, it appears by his creature Fouché's Memoirs, declared it to be an unaccountably vigorous, and well-timed measure for a British Government to adopt.

The details connected with this proceeding passed chiefly through my hands, and were of the most confidential nature. Even our minister Garlike, at Copenhagen, was ignorant of our intentions. Never shall I forget being roused in the dead of the night by a messenger from him, who I found had come by *the Sound.*

The first question I asked him was, 'Did you see anything remarkable in crossing it?' 'Yes, the Danish ferrymen were aghast at counting one, two, three, and

up to sixteen men-of-war coming up in line in the mist of the morning fog.' I immediately started for Canning's house. I saw that the gallant Keates had secured the passage, and the seal of poor Garlike's dispatches remained unbroken until the next day.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 8, 1807.

Lord Fitzharris informs your Lordship of the contents of the 13th Article of the Treaty of Tilsit between Russia and France.[1] The period mentioned for our acceptance or rejection of the mediation is so absurd, that I am almost tempted to think that Alexander cannot intend to act upon it, more especially as the note which contained the offer of this mediation, although it alluded to the 13th Article, made none to this stipulation contained in it. If we must have war with Russia, we cannot have it on more just ground than that on which we now stand: the same may be said of America.

All her violence and intemperance makes our cause so much the better. Your Lordship knows, I believe, that we have got Jefferson's proclamation prohibiting our ships from entering American ports. Parliament will not, I fear, be prorogued before Saturday next; this is unlucky, it will run the Danish business very hard. No Mails are come in.

[1] Dividing Europe between Napoleon and Alexander.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N.,[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

The 'Zebra,' off Vedbek, August 16, 1807.

I told you last time I wrote, I was going to attempt finding out a new channel between the Swedish continent and the island of Sattholm. We could not make much of this; a small and shallow one there certainly is, but not broad or deep enough for men of war, at least, large ones. With this intelligence I returned just time enough to see George[2] for an hour, before I was dispatched again to keep up a telegraphic communication between Copenhagen and Elsinore, and continued on that service till last night, when the fleet and army came up, and this morning the disembarkation has taken place without the least opposition, and under the most favourable circumstances of wind and weather. Sir A. Wellesley and Sir David Baird have been detached with their brigades to the right, and as soon as the cavalry and artillery horses are landed, the army advances, and will be under the walls of Copenhagen early to-morrow. The fleet moves up to accompany them, and I conclude something very decisive must take place in a day or two. The Danes appear to me to have principally apprehended an attack by sea, and have been strengthening themselves as much as possible on that side by new works on the Crown Batteries, &c.,

[1] Afterwards Sir William Bowles. He married Lord Palmerston's sister, and died in 1869, at the age of ninety, Admiral of the Fleet. He and his brother, who contribute so many letters to this collection, were kinsmen of Lord Malmesbury, and kept up a regular correspondence with him, during the French war, in which they were both actively employed.

[2] His brother, in the Coldstream Guards, then serving in our investing army.

but I rather think they will be found very much unprepared to resist the kind of attack that they are likely to experience on the other side. By the best information we can collect, they have at most not more than 6,000 men in this Island, and as our force when the Germans join, will, I fancy, be towards 30,000, they will not hold out long.

I hope we shall take all the ships away, and totally destroy all batteries, both here and at Cronenberg Castle, and after that I suppose we have no business here any longer. I'm afraid we shall not even stay long enough to shoot any cocks of the wood, or any of the other birds of which we hear such famous accounts here.

Off Charlstien, August 17, 1807.

I began this letter yesterday, but as the 'Sylvia' is still here, I will give you the latest news before I close it. General Spencer's brigade was landed this morning, and the army is now within two miles of Copenhagen. We have yet heard no firing, but the Danes this morning bombarded the transports belonging to the German Legion, and it being quite calm, sent out eleven gunboats, and before we could dispatch a sufficient force from the fleet, they had boarded a large ship, one of the convoy, and set fire to her. Hostilities are therefore begun by them.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 21, 1807.

Within half an hour of my sending off my notes, Mr. Hart, the agent for Tonningen, came to the office,

his account is, that so soon as the Prince Royal was informed of the object of Mr. Jackson's mission, he sent troops to Tonningen, and ordered that no packets should be allowed to send their mails through Holstein, and that the British agents and messengers, &c. shall quit the place. The two Thorntons have also quitted Altona and Kiel, and are on their passage home. Mr. Hart says he understood that Mr. Jackson endeavoured to follow the Prince Royal by land, but was stopped by the want of horses and was forced to embark on board a ship of war for Copenhagen, which shortly afterwards was driven back to Kiel by a violent tempest; this was either on or about the 11th. The agent left Tonningen on the 17th, without hearing any more of Mr. Jackson. The Hamburgh 'Correspondenz' of the 15th, says the Crown Prince arrived at Copenhagen on the 11th; that it was uncertain what were the intentions of the British Admiral, but that the Danes were making preparations to resist; it adds that it was reported Brook Taylor had left Copenhagen, and arrived at Kiel.

I cannot believe this—if he quitted the capital he would have gone on board the fleet, and if the Danes were making preparations that would be the signal for attacking them, and if they were attacked on the 12th we should probably have heard of it by this time.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 22, 1807.

My letter by yesterday's post will have put your Lordship fully in possession of all we know concerning

the Danish business, except in one particular, which I did not know till this morning—the Crown Prince of Denmark has returned to Kiel, and brought the King his father with him. Mr. Hart (the agent) I find does not know what became of Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Canning told me in confidence this morning, that he was now glad Adlerberg[1] was not gone, he showed him a letter from Prince Czartoryski yesterday, which was particularly interesting. The Empress Mother is in a great fright lest the public should suppose from her love of peace that she had any influence in bringing it about.

The reigning Empress told the Emperor Alexander she should only make one observation on it, '*vous êtes jeune et vous aurez le temps de vous en repentir.*' Czartoryski, Novissiltzoff, and Stroganoff with two others have resigned their offices of senators, rather than be present at the ratification of the Treaty by the Senate. They have done so, however, without incurring the displeasure of His Imperial Majesty. Czartoryski has seen them since and writes that 'son cœur n'a pas changé, *quoiqu'il ait perdu la tête.* The Treaty itself is considered as inexcusable. I hope we shall use all the means that Alexander will allow us to use, rather to soften than irritate his feelings. Gentleness may win him back to us in a few months.

The above is of course for your Lordship alone.

[1] Danish Minister at London.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Zebra,' Copenhagen Roads, August 25, 1807.

I take up my narrative where I fancy I left off on the 17th, with the actual commencement of hostilities with the Danes, and their having set fire to an English ship. Very soon after this I had *sensible* demonstration of their disposition, for a sortie having been made from the town supported by a great number of gunboats, the smaller ships of the fleet were sent to attack the latter, and the 'Zebra' amongst others had a long battle with them. The gunboats were driven in, and the next day I was sent to Kioge Bay to assist in landing the division of the German Legion under Lord Rosslyn. This disembarkation was effected on the 21st without loss or opposition, though the Danes had 4,000 men at Roskild within three German miles of us, and their dragoons had the night before patrolled all the villages we occupied on landing. Lord Rosslyn's troops appeared to me to be very fine men, all infantry and artillery, about 7,000 strong, the cavalry being landed on the other side of Copenhagen with Lord Cathcart. Soon after we were safe on shore we were much delighted to receive dispatches from headquarters, with an account of General Daken (I believe I spell his name wrong, but he is a German) having surprised at Fredericksund a detachment of 800 men trying by making a *détour* to get into Copenhagen, and had taken them all with 40 ammunition waggons, and four pieces of cannon.

This service being over I rejoined the fleet here on

the 23rd, and found everything pretty much as I left it. The gunboats have continued very troublesome, and their long 24 and 32-pounders have proved more than a match for the carronades of the vessels who have engaged them; but a battery of heavy guns which has been mounted so as to flank them as they advance, keeps them in order. Of the operations of our army hitherto, I know too little to give an account.

Their position is the same they took up originally, at least with a few trifling variations; however, the getting the battering-train mounted, batteries made, &c., naturally takes up some time, which, to us lookers on, seems to be passed in inactivity.

To-morrow I understand the batteries are to be ready to open, and then I hope a vigorous attack must follow, and from the known smallness of the *regular* force in the town, I trust the issue will not be long doubtful. A firing has been going on all the time I have been writing. I must go and see what is the matter ——I find it is a general attack on the Danish outposts on the left, which we see clearly; they were very soon driven under the walls by our riflemen *only*, who maintained themselves in a wood, within musket-shot of the citadel, as long as we could see them.

The enemy appear to me to fight very faintly; all I have seen to-night *ran* away. The gunboats came out and attempted to support their troops, but a few shells soon drove them back.

I have, however, had the misfortune to have my Sergeant of Artillery killed, a very fine fellow (and now especially), a very great loss. If we can maintain

ourselves in the posts we get into this evening something very decisive must soon happen.

All the northern part of the sea line will be completely commanded by the batteries we shall erect, and they must either be sunk or retire immediately into the arsenal. I cannot find out whether an attack is to be made by our fleet; between you and me I think we ought not to be idle, and see the army take the town by themselves.

THE HON. CHARLES BAGOT[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Foreign Office, August 26, 1807.

I have every reason to think you have an interest, and I am sure you have a curiosity, about knowing how I proceed in my office.

It is now five o'clock, and nothing as yet come from the Baltic. How very extraordinary! The wind is still contrary, but I think we might have heard something ere this. The greatest news I have to send you is, that we are going immediately to play the same game at Lisbon that we are now playing at Copenhagen.

Yesterday dispatches were received from Lord Strangford, announcing that Buonaparte had ordered the Portuguese to shut their ports against us, confiscate British property, and seize British subjects. Buonaparte gave them till September 1. A council was held immediately. I hope we shall do this business with as much dispatch and as much secrecy

[1] Mr. Bagot, afterwards Sir Charles Bagot, succeeded Lord Fitzharris as Under Secretary at the Foreign Office on August 19, on his being appointed Governor of the Isle of Wight.

as the last. We have six ships at home ready, and Gambier or Collingwood must spare us the rest. I'm afraid if land force is necessary, we may be puzzled a little in procuring it.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BOWLES,[1] COLDSTREAM GUARDS, TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Fredericksburg, September 1, 1807.

I am writing this in a summer-house in his Danish Majesty's gardens, where we have been quartered since the 18th ult. We are at present very busily employed completing our batteries, and I do not think the town will hold out long after we begin the bombardment, although they have made a show of resistance by burning the suburbs, &c. I went yesterday with a party of our brigade to escort 1,500 prisoners, taken by Sir A. Wellesley in an action three days ago. I do not know their whole loss, as Sir A. W. was in full pursuit when his dispatches came away, but they had killed about 200, and taken 1 General, 60 officers, and 10 pieces of cannon, besides those I saw. They are the most miserable-looking beings you can imagine; our brigade wouldbeat 10,000 at any time. They seem to place entire reliance on their batteries, as, except two miserable attempts at a sortie, they have done nothing since we came, and the only service we see is on a working party. Our brigade

[1] Now General Sir G. Bowles, K.C.B.; Lieutenant of the Tower of London, served throughout most of the Peninsular War, and at Waterloo. Was some time Comptroller of Her Majesty's household. With his kind permission I publish his letters, giving a very interesting account of his campaigns.

has been miraculously fortunate, as we have not had a man even touched. Sir David Baird was wounded twice yesterday, but it is, I believe, very trifling. My brother[1] and myself contrive to organize a meeting now and then, which is, you may imagine, not unpleasant. We are so near the town, our advanced picquets not being more than 200 yards from the ramparts, that there is no chance of our getting any shooting, which is, I hear, very excellent near this place, particularly the black game. I suppose we shall be in England by the beginning of November, if we reduce the town in any reasonable time.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Zebra,' Copenhagen Roads, September 1, 1807.

We are still waiting for the completion of the batteries, which we are now positively told will be ready to open *to-morrow*. I have however heard this to-morrow so often repeated for the last week that I am rather incredulous. Lord Cathcart's plan is to try the effect of a bombardment first, and 38 mortars will very soon give the Danes a taste of that. A summons is to be sent in as soon as everything is ready, offering the same terms as were at first proposed. This, I believe, is authentic intelligence, as I had it yesterday from Brook Taylor who had seen Lord Cathcart in the morning and heard all these determinations, else we have so many lies going about I should be afraid to tell you anything I had not seen. Since my letter of the 25th nothing material has taken place on either side.

[1] Commanding the 'Zebra' bomb-ship.

We have been occupied entirely in landing our ammunition, &c., and in preparing our batteries, and the Danes have I suppose been taking what measures they are able to oppose us. I am exceedingly anxious to see offensive operations begun, though Sir A. Wellesley's complete success against the sort of army they were assembling at Roskild makes me less uneasy.

What I chiefly fear now is, any change of weather obliging our squadron to leave the Great Belt, or giving the enemy (either French or Danes) an opportunity of slipping over. The military, however, are very sanguine, and I hope my next letter may tell you we are in quiet possession of Copenhagen. I was round the lines on Sunday and saw George (my brother) quite well at Fredericksburg, where the guards have famous quarters. The country is very pretty and more like England than most places I have seen, but the mischief we are doing is of course great, and would make one melancholy if war did not harden one's heart. All the harvest which was just cut is still lying on the ground, most of the peasants having been ordered into Copenhagen to assist in its defence, and the rest with their waggons and horses pressed into our service.

It is all absolutely necessary, but to be sure rather shocking. However, in all other parts of the island everything is going on as usual. We had a battle with the gun and mortar boats yesterday, which ended in their blowing up one of our armed transports with a shell and obliging the rest of us to move further off. Several of the other ships had narrow escapes, and

these confounded boats are so small that we may fire all day without being able to touch them, while they hit us every time.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Downing Street, September 2, 1807.

Dispatches have been received from Lieutenant General Cathcart,[1] and Vice Admiral Gambier, by which it appears that Lord Cathcart joined the Admiral on the 12th ult., and that on the 13th Mr. Taylor, His Majesty's Minister at the Court of Copenhagen, having left that city from the Danish Government having declined to enter into an amicable arrangement, it was determined to land the army early in the morning of the 14th, but owing to contrary winds the ships of war and transports could not be brought up to the place of debarkation till late in the evening of the 15th.

Early, however, on the morning of the 16th, the army was disembarked at a village called Vedbeck, about ten miles north of Copenhagen, without any opposition. Lord Rosslyn, with the troops from Stralsund, had arrived on the 14th off the Mo'en Island. Upon the debarkation of the troops a proclamation by the Commanders of the sea and land forces was issued, declaring to the inhabitants of Zealand the circumstances under which they had felt themselves compelled to proceed to the debarkation of the troops. By private letters of the 17th it appears that Copenhagen was then completely invested. The division of troops from

[1] Commander-in-chief of the land forces.

Stralsund had anchored in Kiorge Bay the preceding day. They were fired at, but without effect, from the Danish batteries.

THE HON. C. BAGOT TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Foreign Office, September 3, 1807.

Very early this morning dispatches arrived at the Admiralty from Copenhagen, which left that place on the morning of the 23rd. Nothing of any consequence had been done since the landing of the troops, previous to that day; but on that day Mr. Hoppner (who came in the cutter which brought the dispatches) said that they heard a tremendous firing, and thought that with their glasses they distinguished a very general action. Mr. Hoppner said that it was supposed Copenhagen might hold out a week. The French entered Stralsund on the 23rd. The King and the garrison had previously gone to Bergen.

The King had taken the command of the garrison from General Essen into his own hands, and then finding what he might have found long ago, that the place was not tenable, retired with the military and left the citizens to open the gates to the French. I cannot resist enclosing you an extract from an intercepted letter from Wetterstedt to Adlerberg.[1] I think it will amuse you not a little. You cannot conceive how it entertained Canning.

[1] Adlerberg was Danish Minister in London, whom the Foreign Office was obliged to deceive during our preparations.

EXTRACT FROM M. WETTERSTEDT'S LETTER.

Stralsund, August 7, 1807.

The language which Lord Fitzharris has held out to you does not seem to correspond with the measures of the British Government.

At the same moment that the said Under Secretary of State tells you that his Government is resolved to support His Majesty with troops, orders are sent from England to Mr. Pierrepoint to demand the return of the German Legion. It is difficult to fathom the purpose of this contradiction between words and actions.

To avoid a similar circumstance in future, His Majesty orders you to give Lord Fitzharris to understand that your reports founded upon his, Lord Fitzharris's[1] assurances having been falsified by the event immediately after occurring, you had received His Majesty's express orders never hereafter to enter with his Lordship into any political discussions, unless he should have the authority for so doing from the Secretary of State, Mr. Canning.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Copenhagen Roads, September 6, 1807.

I hope I may almost venture to congratulate you on the fall of Copenhagen, as all hostilities have ceased since last night and the Admiral with Sir H. Popham went to Lord Cathcart at six o'clock this morning. The bombardment, which commenced Wednesday night and

[1] Lord Fitzharris was Parliamentary U. S. at the Foreign Office.

has continued without much intermission ever since, has been the most tremendous sight that can be well conceived, but the night before last much surpassed all the rest, particularly when the largest church caught fire, and the spire (which was a remarkably beautiful one) fell in. It is impossible of course to ascertain what damage has been done, but the town is still burning furiously, and I suppose the number of houses which have been destroyed is incalculable. The obstinate old Governor deserves that the inhabitants should tear him to pieces, for he has been able to oppose no kind of fire to our bombardments and was only standing quietly by to see the city totally destroyed. I believe it is certain that our assault was to have been made in two or three days, and from what I have seen of the Danes I don't think their resistance would have been very desperate. I hope, however, that they will be wise enough to capitulate now, and not force us to such extremities. Our loss has hitherto been incredibly small, from all I have heard I should imagine *within* 300 killed and wounded since the landing this day three weeks, though the fire sometimes has been very hot. The boats have not been of much service. The Crown Batteries prevented our getting near enough to throw shells into the town with any great effect. Since I began this letter I find a flag of truce came out at seven o'clock last night, and that the terms of capitulation are now settling at head-quarters.

One may so easily imagine what they will be, that it is not worth while to keep my letter here to tell you of them. Without any compliments, this whole busi-

ness has been the best planned and conducted of any English expedition within my memory.

The navy have had but little opportunity of distinguishing themselves hitherto, but if the town had held out a day or two longer, some batteries manned by seamen were to have done something surprising.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 7, 1807.

I had for this last week almost forgotten that there was such a country as Russia, having thought of nothing but Copenhagen by day and dreamt of it by night.

Budberg was not returned when Lord G. L. Gower sent off his last dispatches (the 2nd ult.) and his adjoint was not authorised to make him any communication relative to the treaty of Tilsit. All looks very bad from that quarter. They have in the city letters from thence of the 8th, these say that Budberg had returned and been invested with the order of St. Andrew. Tchitchikoff had been appointed from *Ministre Adjoint* to *Ministre Actuel* of the marine. Our old aquaintance N. Romanzoff was hesitating whether to accept the mission to Paris, and General Savary was daily instructing the Corps de Cadets in the French tactics.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Downing Street, September 16, 1807.

Advices have been this morning received from Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart containing the

important intelligence of the surrender of the citadel and town of Copenhagen to his Majesty's arms, on the 8th, and also of the Danish fleet and arsenal, which are placed at his Majesty's disposal. No shot was fired till after a summons offering the most advantageous terms. The bombardment continued three nights—on the evening of the 5th, a letter was sent by the Danish General to propose an armistice, on which lieutenant-colonel Murray was sent to explain that no proposal would be listened to without the surrender of the fleet. This basis being admitted Sir Arthur Wellesley and Sir H. Popham were employed to arrange the capitulation, which was concluded on the 6th, and ratified on the 7th. The citadel and arsenal were taken possession of by His Majesty's forces on the 8th. Our loss amounted to 42 killed, and 138 wounded, and 22 missing, 4 officers killed, and 5 wounded. The Danish fleet consists of 18 sail of the line, 15 frigates, 6 sloops, and 25 gunboats.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 21, 1807.

After I had written my note of Saturday to your Lordship, Sir Robert Wilson[1] arrived from St. Petersburg, which he left on the 2nd inst. The dispatches he brought are of a much more conciliatory nature than any we have received since the peace of Tilsit.

[1] Sir R. Wilson afterwards played a distinguished part in the campaigns in Spain and Germany of 1812, 13, 14. He assisted in the escape of Lavalette in 1815, and was a zealous partisan of Queen Caroline, at whose funeral he promoted the popular demonstrations, and was dismissed from the army in 1821. Restored subsequently to his rank, he was Governor of Gibraltar in 1842, and died in 1849.

Lord F. L. Gower found Budberg in his last conference more unreserved and less overbearing than in any former one. General Budberg assures Lord F. L. Gower that there are no secret articles hostile to Great Britain, nor a word respecting the shutting of the Russian ports against our commerce.

After this last official conference, Lord F. L. Gower had a long private conversation with the General, in which the latter said he did not consider the peace as a lasting one, that the French were not yet cured of their revolutionary restlessness: he viewed the peace as affording a breathing time, and wished to profit of it to renew a confidential intercourse with Austria and Great Britain. The Emperor's language to Sir R. Wilson was much of the same tenor. Mr. Canning seems to think from all this (I should have sooner observed that no secret articles have been communicated) that there may be no secret articles, but he seems convinced that a general understanding was agreed upon between the two Emperors which is hostile to us. We attribute a great deal of this mild spirit to our expedition. Its result up to the 23rd inst. had been received there; it has created a great deal of apprehension at St. Petersburg. At Cronstadt they practise firing with red-hot shot every day. This change of tone may not perhaps be followed up by any permanent change of conduct; it may be merely for the purpose of gaining time, and from the dread of some immediate hostility on our part; but at all events it will give us the winter to look about us, and the chapter of accidents for some bickering to arise between the two Courts of the Tuileries and St. Petersburg.

Romanzow is a friend to the treaty of commerce, and hopes to see it finished. Budberg has promised to submit our project to the Emperor.

The sum of all this seems to be either that His Imperial Majesty is already weary of his new ally, and that the recollection of the Tilsit dinners is wearing away, or else (to use his own words on a former occasion) '*il faut ménager l'Angleterre pour le moment.*'

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 23, 1807.

From everything I have learnt since Sir R. Wilson's arrival, and comparing what the Emperor himself said to him with what has been written by those who have been uniform opposers of the treaty of Tilsit, I have little doubt that a great change has taken place both in the mind of His Imperial Majesty and his Ministers. We owe this no doubt, in a great measure, to the vigour and promptitude displayed in our expedition to Copenhagen, but we have only to cultivate this change of sentiment to derive from it in time, and that perhaps not very distant, the best possible effects. Budberg, I believe, had not strict justice done him on the subject of the treaty; he was on the spot, in office, and the Emperor made him the cat's paw to put his fingers in the fire. He was not much consulted, and disliked the peace. He insinuated to Sir R. Wilson that the *secret articles* might not be withheld from a person sent from here. I believe Sir R. Wilson will return in a few days. Russia is anxious, since the deed is done, that we should retain possession of Zealand, not merely for the

sake of the King of Sweden, but also as a security to her own frontiers. She is quite aware that when we quit it the French will occupy it; from thence the passage to Sweaborg is short, and once there, Russia trembles for herself. The article relative to the evacuation of Zealand embarrasses us a good deal. It seems to have been a very gratuitous, unwise, and unnecessary concession on the part of our commanders, the more so as they have made it unconditional, and not even left opening for reference home.

I cannot conceive how Jackson could consent to it, if he was consulted. The resistance opposed by the Danes altered the whole character of the transaction, and surely they ought not to have received the same favourable terms after resistance as were held out to them as inducements for an amicable arrangement. Jackson, for aught we know, may have been *hanged* in Holstein: we have not heard from him since the 8th. Lord Whitworth is going to Denmark immediately, to see what can be done for getting us out of our present embarrassment if we give up Zealand. I should not be surprised to see Russia resume her late line of conduct.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 29, 1807.

Sir R. Wilson did not go yesterday; he will to-day. If he had related merely *his own opinions*, I should certainly have hesitated to give *implicit confidence* to them; but what he has stated is the Emperor's conversation with him, confirmed subsequently to him by General Budberg, with the collateral proof afforded by Lord

G. L. Gower of the change in Budberg's tone and manner.

Under these circumstances it is good policy, I think, to send Sir R. Wilson back; he is a military man, has served with the Russians, has been spoken to confidentially by the Emperor, and may do better than a better man. Nothing important is, however, to be left to his sole discretion. If Russia is sincere, it is worth while to keep her up to it by showing a disposition to cultivate and strengthen our former good understanding; if she is not sincere, or if she has only acted in this instance on the spur of the occasion, and even should she have relapsed into French politics before Sir R. Wilson returns, there will be no harm done: we shall be but where we were. A communication of the secret articles Lord F. G. Gower is instructed to insist upon, also a renewal of the treaty of commerce and an explicit avowal of the future general policy of Russia.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Copenhagen, the 'Zebra,' October 5, 1807.

We are still hard at work embarking the Danish naval stores on board the transports. We now hope to have everything shipped by the end of this week, and if the weather is fine I daresay we shall. I cannot give you a better idea of the immense quantity we found than by telling you that a working party of 6,000 of the army, exclusive of sailors, have been constantly employed from daylight till dark, ever since the surrender, loading the ships, and a great deal still remains. The Danes themselves value all that we have

taken at ten millions sterling, and I really think that is not so great an exaggeration as it sounds to be. It is quite certain it is of the last importance to us at present, as we have found everything we most wanted in our own dockyards, in particular spars for masts, and oak timber, to say nothing of great quantities of lignum vitæ for block-making, hemp, copper, &c. &c.

We were in the greatest danger of not only losing the arsenal, and all the stores, but our own ships in it into the bargain, about ten days ago. A magazine of filled shells, carcasses, &c., was set fire to by a musket going off accidentally, and blew up with a tremendous explosion. The storehouses nearest were of course set on fire, but by exertions which even now amaze one to reflect on it was got under with scarcely any damage. Our people were playing the fire-engines while the shells were bursting all around them, and dragging those which were found so heated as to be in danger of going off every minute. Sir S. Hood and Captain Dacres (of the 'Pompey') distinguished themselves particularly, and all of us whose ships were in the arsenal, and who of course were on the spot, had the honour of being thanked next day in orders. It is wonderful that not more than ten or twelve men were killed and wounded in the whole business. If no counter-orders are received, I should imagine the whole of the fleet and army will quit this place within a fortnight; and as this is reckoned a fine month, and we shall have a moon and all other advantages of that sort, I hope a week afterwards we shall be showing all our prizes at Yarmouth or the Nore.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 8, 1807.

I have received your Lordship's letter of yesterday. I am quite glad you went to Bulstrode,[1] as it afforded your Lordship so fair an opportunity of making yourself acquainted with the nature of our late *besogne*. I made myself sure that you would be pleased with it, when you were in possession of the *spirit* in which the late instructions were written and sent off. If nothing can be done at St. Petersburg, no ill consequences will result from them; and if any advantage is to be derived from the accounts brought by Sir R. Wilson, they are well calculated to produce a good effect.

Our accounts of the 19th from St. Petersburg, received yesterday, are not promising. M. Montesquieu, a chamberlain of Buonaparte, had arrived there a few days before with, it is said, important communications.

Lord G. L. Gower professes his ignorance of them (we are not quite so much in the dark probably). Everything passes between the Emperor and Savary in person: the secret articles are still refused to be communicated. Soltikoff, during his short reign as Minister, was authorized to say so. Lord G. L. Gower has had a conference with Romanzow, who told him he had not yet seen, nor could he find, the *projet* of the treaty of commerce; he supposed His Imperial Majesty had it, and promised to take his pleasure on it. Budberg, in his circular, states his retirement as temporary, on account of his health. The French troops were to be conveyed to Corfu in *Russian* ships. This intelligence Lord G. L.

[1] Bulstrode was the seat of the Duke of Portland.

Gower had sent to Vienna. The inhabitants of Corfu, and the Greeks of the different islands, are much dissatisfied with being thus sacrificed to France. They dread our naval power.

The Turks refuse to surrender Ismail and Giurjego according to the terms of the armistice. On the whole, though I could have wished for better accounts, yet I am not much disappointed. All that has taken place between the date of the Emperor's conversation with Sir R. Wilson and that of these despatches has passed whilst Russia was still ignorant of the result of our expedition (the news of its success was only received there on *the* 19*th*). The first appearance of our armament excited the Emperor's fears. The interval between this and its success, with the chance of its failure, on which we are told they speculated, kept him pretty equally balanced. The final accomplishment of our object, backed by what Sir R. Wilson carried with him, may turn the scale; but if it only serves to gain time, much good may hereafter be derived from it. Your Lordship is too well acquainted with Romanzow to need any information about him. He felt so little at home in his first conference that he was glad to end it. There are no movements of troops towards Swedish Finland.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 12, 1807.

Captain King arrived this morning from Copenhagen. He left it on the 29th ult. All the ships but one or two were ready.

Some of these with naval stores are arrived. There is an idea that the French, in conjunction with the Danes, mean to attempt an attack on Zealand previous to our quitting it. A Lisbon mail came in yesterday. The Prince Regent continues firm to his purpose of going to the Brazils if Buonaparte should not relax the conditions he has threatened to impose on him. There is a report in Spain (and it is believed there) that Madame Josephine is to be divorced from her husband, and that he will marry a *Russian Grand Duchess.* This would be the very acme of Alexander's folly. I cannot think that *he dares* to consent to this. As this news comes through a private channel, I do not wish it to be mentioned.

P.S.—Mr. Hammond has just told me, *in confidence*, that Denmark has concluded an *offensive* and *defensive* alliance with France.

THE HON. C. BAGOT TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Foreign Office, October 13, 1807.

Nothing can be more melancholy than all the accounts from Prussia. The wanton cruelties and vexations which are daily inflicted upon the whole country exceed all belief, and I believe the King's sufferings are very far from being at an end.

I do not think myself that there is good news from any quarter. The Danes and French have certainly entered into alliance. The Russian news is as bad as possible in my own private opinion; that is to say, the Emperor appears to be more Frenchified every day, and the ascendency of Savary is complete.

We are most impatient for the next accounts from Petersburg. Canning is at George Ellis's. He talks of going into Leicestershire in about ten days. He has been sadly fagged.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 26, 1807.

Many thanks for your Lordship's letter of yesterday. Under other circumstances of the world, it would certainly be treating Louis XVIII.[1] as he deserves, for the embarrassment he has occasioned, to prevent his landing; but it would be both a harsh measure and somewhat savouring of cowardice to adopt it in the times we live in. The frigate is expected to land him at Sheerness, but it was not arrived when the last accounts were received from thence. Ministers have determined that Louis XVIII. shall reside at Holyrood House, and if it is possible to effect it, that he shall proceed to Leith in the frigate. It will be a relief to your Lordship to know this. We have no news of any sort.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 28, 1807.

I have received and forwarded your Lordship's packet to its address, and I enclose the two little pamphlets you desire to have. Admiral Stanhope with his division, consisting of a few of our line-of-battle ships, some of the Danish, and a large fleet of

[1] He had been, after the defeat of the Royalists at Valmy, a refugee at Blankenburg and Milan.

transports with stores, is by this time arrived at Sheerness. The fleet left Gottenburg on the 20th, and, after the severe gale which forced them to that port, had fine weather for their passage.

A messenger came from Gottenburg this morning. He left Petersburg on the 29th ult. They are (that is, Alexander and his new Foreign Minister) very waspish there; they snarl and growl, but seem shy of biting. I have not seen the despatches, *only* Romanzow's note on our expedition, and Lord G. Leveson Gower's answer. The latter has acted like an angel. Alexander in the note, after expressing the particular interest he takes in the Danish royal territory, expresses the disapprobation which he says he cannot fail to feel at our recent conduct, and previous silence towards him as to our intentions in quality of his guarantee of the tranquillity of the Baltic. Lord Gower in his answer clearly insinuates that the silence of Russia towards us on the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit rendered this silence (before the blow was struck) necessary on our part. He denies the exclusive principle asserted by Russia with respect to the Baltic, and says that, if such *had* ever existed, the allowing our flag to be excluded from the Baltic ports, from Lubeck to Memel, was a complete abandonment of this guarantee on the part of Russia. Romanzow told him in a conference that the Emperor did not mean to lay an embargo on British ships. Lord Gower answered he was glad to hear it, and would not fail to transmit this home. Romanzow replied he did not mean to say what the Emperor might *hereafter* think proper to do. I fancy they will look at it twice before they do it. This year I think we are secure from

it—their Exchange is at 23*d.*; it was 2*s.* 7*d.* and 2*s.* 8*d.* when I was there. Merry had not seen anybody; he had sent to Kiel, but did not look for the answer before the 19th. The Crown Prince is too angry with us, I believe, to listen to any other feelings than those of resentment.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

November 2, 1807.

I beg to inform your Lordship that I leave town to-night with Mr. Bagot, for Yarmouth, to meet Louis XVIII.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Fludyer Street, November 4, 1807.

Mr. Bagot and myself left town on Saturday evening in the hope of reaching Yarmouth just about the time that Louis XVIII. would have landed. From delays on the road for want of horses, and a détour to be made by the road to Gossfield Hall,[1] we entered Yarmouth at the very moment that Louis XVIII. quitted it; our carriages passed each other.

We did not attempt, for obvious reasons, to stop His most Christian Majesty's carriage, but as soon as our horses were refreshed (for there were no others to be had) we turned their heads round and followed Louis XVIII. Luckily he also was retarded by the want of horses, and could only get as far as Yexford (instead of Woodbridge, where he had intended to sleep), thirty miles from Yarmouth, that evening. On our arrival at Yexford, and learning that His most Christian Majesty was there

[1] Belonging to Lord Buckingham.

and at supper, Mr. Bagot sent in a note to Monsieur, to whom he was directed in the first instance to address himself, stating in few words that he was charged to make a communication to him from His Majesty's Ministers, and couching the note in such language as not to give rise to any suspicion that our mission was of an unpleasant nature. Monsieur came out to us immediately, and received us with his usual good-nature; he could not help remarking, however, in answer to what Mr. Bagot was charged with to Louis XVIII., 'C'est un peu tard, messieurs, mais enfin passe pour cela.' As soon as His most Christian Majesty had supped, we were introduced to him. Mr. Bagot and myself (for it was a sort of joint conversation) then told him 'that we were charged by His Majesty's Government, and more particularly by Lord Hawkesbury and Mr. Canning, to inform His most Christian Majesty that we had not approached him sooner from a wish not to break in upon the first moments of his interview with his royal brother; that we were now come to learn, without giving His most Christian Majesty the trouble of writing a formal answer, what were His Majesty's intentions with respect to his residence at Holyrood House; and that, whatever for the moment they might be, His Majesty's Government would receive with respect His most Christian Majesty's determination; and that we were instructed to receive His Majesty's orders, and to facilitate by every means in our power every object which could contribute to His Majesty's personal convenience and comfort. Louis XVIII. received us with his well-known benignity, heard us with attention, and replied to us in a few words, that he was very

sensible of this attention on the part of His Majesty's Government, that he proposed going to Gossfield Hall, where he intended to remain for about eight days, and that from thence he would acquaint Lord Hawkesbury with what were his future intentions.

Louis XVIII. then turned to me (he had my name at hand, and knew I was formerly, in 1796, at Paris with your Lordship), and charged me to express in a very particular manner to Mr. Canning the sense he entertained of his personal attentions to him, and the impression they had made on his mind. Louis XVIII. then conversed with us for a few moments with great affability and good-humour. On our again repeating that we held ourselves at His Majesty's orders, he replied that he would not detain us any longer, and it seemed to be both his and Monsieur's opinion that we should return to London; Monsieur adding, that the way in which we could best serve His Majesty at present would be by ordering him horses on the road, which he would take it very kind of us to do. This of course we did, and we learn from our servants whom we were obliged to leave on the road that His Majesty and his suite met with no interruption on their way to Gossfield Hall. On the whole our mission seems to have turned out very well; we were certainly rather late, by which means some etiquette (such as a salute at landing, &c.) was omitted; but as it was given to be understood that His Majesty's *sudden* and *unexpected* arrival was what we were not *prepared* for, this may surely be forgiven. Admiral Douglas sent his barge for him, and took him to his apartments, where he remained till he left Yarmouth. Burke of the Alien

Office accompanied him, and did everything that could be done. Louis XVIII. made him sup with him, and spoke of him in the highest terms. Burke says that when Monsieur had read Mr. Bagot's note he handed it to Louis XVIII., whose countenance *immediately fell* (though, as I have before said, pains had been taken to avoid the possible construction of anything unpleasant).

However, the impression left on my mind by our mission is that Louis XVIII. is now *perfectly satisfied* with the attention which has been shown him, and that he is convinced that whatever has been omitted may be attributed to the *mode* in which he chose to come into this country.

Mr. Canning has given me leave to send your Lordship a copy[1] of Louis XVIII.'s letter to the King, by which you will better judge of the embarrassment his arrival had put us to. To show you how ticklish the Bourbons were Burke told us that when we had retired they enquired whether it had been our intention to have ordered a salute, which Burke answered in the affirmative, and which answer seemed to give them great pleasure. We of course took care to let them know that we had been to Yarmouth to meet them.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, November 6, 1807.

Your Lordship is very kind to think so favourably of what we did at Yexford. Perhaps it would be wiser to say nothing more than I have already done till I hear your opinion of Louis XVIII.'s letter to the King, but I cannot help saying that His most Christian

[1] Not extant.

Majesty may fairly thank himself for any attentions which may have been omitted. Government had offered him Holyrood House. Had we arrived at Yarmouth in time, there would have been a *salute*; but if Louis XVIII. chose to embarrass the business, first by the concealment of his real intentions, and next by his persevering in going to Gossfield Hall in preference to Holyrood House, it is no fault of ours. By the bye, his reception there on the first night was not very flattering. Burke the messenger preceded him by a few hours. He found, 'tis true, the beds aired, but no fires lighted, nor any provision for supper (this will serve to show how Louis XVIII. has acted), nor any person to cook it. A servant of M. Puysegur who travelled with Burke was the cook, after they sought about and found a hare, some partridges, &c. Lord Buckingham was not there.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, November 10, 1807.

Your Lordship's letter to Mr. Canning places the subject of Louis XVIII. in a very different light to what I believe it had been viewed by Ministers. His letter to the King was considered more as a *forlorn hope* on His Christian Majesty's part, than as founded on any of those reasonable and practicable grounds which your Lordship seems to think it to be just possible Louis XVIII. may have had for writing it. If this should be the case, great good might result from an unreserved communication with him, and if your Lordship could be induced to undertake the mission no possible harm can result from it. My only fear was lest the business should be

confided to an unqualified person. Lord Buckingham is at Gossfield. He has written a private letter to Mr. Canning to-day from thence.

We have accounts from Lisbon to the 20th. Great consternation prevails there, the playhouses are shut up, and seditious handbills circulated, tending to prevent the departure of the royal family for the Brazils. I do not see by the despatches that this measure was likely to be adopted *immediately*.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, November 14, 1807.

I am not quite sure that your Lordship will like every part of my private letter of to-day. All I can add to it is, that it was written to your Lordship by Mr. Canning's instructions, and that he has read it over since it was written. The plan suggested in it will certainly be attended with some personal trouble to your Lordship; but, if adopted by your Lordship, will get rid of some embarrassments, and may attain the object suggested by you. I really cannot help subscribing to Mr. Canning's opinion, that it is infinitely more desirable on many accounts that your Lordship should receive Louis XVIII. at Park Place than visit him at Gossfield Hall.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, November 28, 1807.

I should suppose by this time Prince Starkenberg's[1] courier has been dispatched. His arrival produced a note from the former, desiring us in

[1] The Austrian Minister.

the name of his Court to declare our readiness to enter into negotiations for peace, on such terms as were consistent with the interests of the powers concerned, and *motivant* this demand of Austria on the ground that the continuance of the struggle between Great Britain and France endangered the peace and tranquillity of the powers of the Continent. This is the sum and substance of the note. What is behind may be easily conjectured, since Buonaparte is not a man to allow those to whom he can dictate to stop short at half measures. No menace is however conveyed in Prince Starkenberg's note. I do not know what they will say to our answer; it says but little, and that little has been often said before. It begins by testifying His Majesty's surprise that any declaration of the sort required should be demanded from him after the answer already returned to the Austrian offer of mediation in April last, and subsequently to that made to a similar offer on the part of the Emperor of Russia, with which the Cabinet of Vienna is acquainted. But nevertheless His Majesty, out of regard for his ally and in compliance with his wishes, has no objection to repeat what he has so often repeated before, that he is willing to enter into negotiations for the conclusion of a peace on such terms as shall be consistent with his interests, with his fidelity to his allies, and the tranquillity and security of Europe.

I hope your Lordship will indulge me with your opinion of this answer. I do not see what other could be given to it; though I hope it will not lead to *peace*, for the time for making peace is in my mind not yet come. A messenger came this morning from St. Petersburg; he left it on the 30th ult.

Sir R. Wilson arrived fourteen days before, and the Emperor was returned from Witspek, but the former had *not* seen him. I do not learn that things are much altered there for the better or the worse. Romanzow had got a report that the Russian fleet was at Spithead, which seemed to surprise him a good deal.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 2, 1807.

Sir R. Wilson arrived in the middle of the night with the intelligence that the *Emperor of Russia had declared war against us.*

I write to save the coach.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 2, 1807.

I had but just time to save the coach, to write to your Lordship the few lines I sent this morning.

Mr. Canning's letter to the Lord Mayor was sent from Stanhope Street. Everybody was late in coming to the office.

I will repeat the heads of the letter, lest there should be any mistake in the newspaper. It states that His Imperial Majesty Alexander having published a declaration in which he announced his determination to break off all communication with England, to recall his Minister from our Court, and not permit the countenance of a British Minister at St. Petersburg, Lord G. L. Gower had demanded his passports and was on his return home.

This is precisely the state in which Russia placed herself with France from the period of the recall of Markoff from Paris, to that of her commencing hostilities against France in 1805. I have not yet seen the despatches received on Saturday, but I understand there was nothing in them which induced the expectation that *this explosion* was so near.

It took place a day or two after the 5th, on which day Lord G. L. Gower felt persuaded that something would shortly occur to put an end to our relations with Russia. It is to be observed, too, that a French officer arrived from Paris *just about this time*, and I have no doubt but that Alexander was ordered to adopt instantly this measure. The despatches of to-day are gone to the King, who did not come to town.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 3, 1807.

Austria treads closely on the heels of Russia. We have indirect accounts that Adair has quitted Vienna. These came a few days ago: no particulars mentioned. The Russian Declaration is long; it begins by abusing the late Ministers for their supineness, and for their selfishness in attacking South America and Egypt instead of making a diversion in Italy and the North of Germany, and the present Ministers for their attack on Copenhagen.

It recites the offer of mediation the Emperor made to us, and our refusal of it; and then states the determination of His Imperial Majesty to annul all treaties, &c., still subsisting between us, particularly that of

1801, the renewal of the principles of the armed neutrality of 1780 and 1800, and his inflexible resolution never again to depart from them; asserts that the Baltic is a *mare clausum*, and declares his determination never to renew his friendly relations with us till we consent to subscribe to these principles, and *till we shall have concluded peace with France.* This is the outline; I believe I have quoted correctly, but I nly saw the paper for a few minutes, and read it with half-a-dozen people talking in the room.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 4, 1807.

Sir R. Wilson says that the declaration of Russia was accelerated by the arrival of a courier from Paris, threatening, if it was not immediately made, to break the treaty of Tilsit and publish the secret articles.

Count Tolstoy, before he went to Paris, told young Count Woronzow that these same secret articles were so shamefully base and atrocious that he could not communicate them to him. It is said that Russia laid an embargo on our shipping on the 15th, but I think most of our ships must have got away.

I have not yet heard what Alexander means to do with the British merchants and their property now in Russia. There was a general expression of dissatisfaction and despondency at St. Petersburg when the declaration of war became public.

1808.

During this year the whole of Europe was a field of battle. In Spain the Duke of Wellington (then Sir A. Wellesley) avenged the retreat of Corunna by a victory at Vimiero which obliged the French army under Junot and Laborde to capitulate. Napoleon had declared his brother Joseph King of Spain.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, April 23, 1808.

It is not in my power to inform your Lordship of many particulars relative to Mr. Rose's return. I understand that he left Washington about the 26th ult., *re infectâ* so far as his mission went, but without any hostile declaration on the part of America further than what we have already experienced from her, viz. the *interdict* against our ships of war. This I am told the President has refused to take off, so that our relations at this moment with America are much in the same state as when Mr. Rose's mission commenced. In addition to the reparation Mr. Rose was empowered to give, the President required other concessions to which he could not accede; in other words, Jefferson wished to mix up all the pretended grievances of America in one general discussion, whilst Mr. Rose's powers went

only to the affair of the 'Chesapeake.' The explanation given for this conduct on the part of the President is that both his character and his popularity (at least what remains of it, for he is said to be *not* so popular as he was) are so committed by the measures which he has taken, that he could not take off the interdict, after the language he had held on resorting to that measure, without losing both the one and the other. That the interdict itself must expire within a given time (I cannot say the precise period), and that it cannot be renewed without an Act of Congress. It is thought, therefore, that the line of policy which he will adopt will be to let the interdict expire of itself, and to consider the reparation offered by Mr. Rose as adequate to the object to which it particularly applied. Munro[1] and Clinton have coalesced; the former only puts himself forward for the Vice-Presidentship. This is the sum of what I have heard. I believe the outline to be correct. Mr. Rose is come to town; I saw him just now in Mr. Hammond's room, but could not speak to him, as Lord Chatham was present.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, April 25, 1808.

I have not heard much more than what I sent to your Lordship on Saturday, except that the American Government have published an order for the discharge of British seamen from their national ships of war. This order they cite as a proof of their moderation, and they add that the embargo, &c., must continue till

[1] Afterwards President of the United States.

France and England repeal their respective decrees, orders of council, &c. Mr. Rose's opinion is that his departure will *not* lead to war, and he gives it as the sentiment of some of the soundest statesmen in America that our true line of policy is not to irritate America at this moment, but to leave her to the full operation of the injuries she is by her folly inflicting on herself. This they say must probably bring her to her senses, and unite her with us against France.

By the Gottenburg mails received this evening we have accounts from Venice through Germany, which induces us to *believe* that the Rochefort squadron has been in the Adriatic and that there has been an action. These accounts are of the 26th ult. A messenger is just arrived from Gottenburg, which he left last Wednesday. All I have heard is that the two Swedish corps have united, that the Swedish generals have secured all the remaining provisions in Finland, and that the Russians have been forced to *halt* from the want of subsistence: their distress, it is said, almost approaches to famine.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, May 19, 1808.

I am sorry to say that the accounts which we have received since my last are a mixture of good and bad. Sweaborg has surrendered, and, what is still worse, there appears little doubt of its having been given up through the treachery of its governor, Admiral Cronstedt. He agreed with the commander of the Russian corps before it that he would surrender the fortress unless it

was relieved by the *3rd of May*, and he so *contrived* that this agreement only reached *Stockholm on the day above mentioned.*

I do not find that there is any other recent or important news, either from Finland or Norway. An officer arrived last evening from Commodore Moore. The Prince Regent is arrived at Rio Janeiro without a ship being missing. His Royal Highness was received with acclamations by the inhabitants. Commodore Moore is gone to look after the Rochefort squadron! This he has done at the request of the Prince Regent, who had fears for St. Salvador, but none for Rio Janeiro. It was thought there that the Rochefort squadron might be ultimately destined for the river La Plata.

The article in the 'Times' of to-day relative to the Porte being desirous of renewing her amicable relations with us is *true*, though only given there as an article of intelligence which is doubtful. This will probably take some of our spare time off our hands.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 13, 1808.

In addition to the accounts from Cadiz and Lisbon published in last night's 'Gazette' your Lordship will read in the 'Morning Post' a paragraph relative to His Swedish Majesty and Sir John Moore. The whole affair is a curious one.[1] The King has acted in this business in his usual hasty and violent manner. Sir John Moore was for a few days in such a situation as to warrant the

[1] Sir John Moore was sent on a special mission—semi-military, semi-diplomatic—to the King of Sweden, which had no results.

assertion that he was under arrest, and from this he had no other means of extricating himself than in passing the barrières of Stockholm in an open carriage with Mr. Thornton (I believe), and then taking post for Gottenburg. This is all I can say on this business at present.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 20, 1808.

All the accounts received yesterday are *couleur de rose*, or rather *de sang*. But as there is a very fair proportion of French blood shed, it is very well.

No doubt seems entertained of General Palafox's success in Aragon. It is said that after the battle the peasants rushed upon the French, and killed every man that the battle had spared. The Sevillian Deputies received accounts yesterday from Cadiz to the 26th. They have sent us word that, in addition to the success of General Palafox, two corps of French troops of 5,000 each have been totally destroyed at Manresa and Tarragona in Catalonia. The French have not more than 3,000 men left in Barcelona.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 28, 1808.

I am sorry to say that our accounts from Stuart[1] to-day are not good; they are dated the 22nd, and inform us that General Cuesta has retreated from Benevente to Astorga, *not*, however, in consequence of any

[1] Sir Charles Stuart, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay, our Commissioner with the Portuguese Government, and a most efficient public servant throughout the Peninsular war.

fresh action, so that his force is as entire as his late battle had left it. The French have another corps to the southward of that which is pressing Cuesta; their object seems to be to relieve Junot, by affording him the means of falling back on them, or by advancing to his support; and this I fear they will do unless Sir Arthur Wellesley should succeed in forcing Junot to surrender.

All I know of Sir Arthur Wellesley is that he was at Corunna on the 22nd, but I have not learnt that Stuart says anything of his plans. If the French are not speedily checked, the communication between the northern and southern provinces is stopped.

Stuart says that the spirit of the people is still good.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 3, 1808.

Sir Thomas Dyer returned last evening from Gijon, which he left on Friday last; no further action had taken place in the north of Spain. I have not seen Sir T. Dyer, but I understand that he speaks rather despondingly; he adds, however, that in the battle of Rio Seco[1] the French did not show any ardour, and that the Spanish infantry was as good as that of the French. The victory was won by the cavalry and artillery of the latter. I find, however, that Cuesta and Blake have separated, not being able to agree together: this is a bad beginning. In the south the prospect looks more cheering. Lord Collingwood writes

[1] On July 14, Bessieres defeated Cuesta and Blake, inflicting a loss of above 6,000 men and eighteen guns upon the Spaniards at Rio Seco.

under date of the 17th ult. that Moncey had been defeated before Valentia, with the loss of from 8 to 10,000 men, besides 1,500 prisoners (who have been sent to the galleys), and himself dangerously wounded. Castanos is hemming in Dupont more closely. It is reported also that the Spaniards have taken the forts of Figueras and Bellegarde (this, if true, is very important, should the patriots prove successful), and that Joseph Buonaparte is arrived at Madrid with 5,000 men. I hope in a few days to hear of Sir Arthur Wellesley having landed. The place of debarkation is to be at the mouth of the river Mondego, near Coimbra, where the Portuguese were in force.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 8, 1808.

A printed report from General Castanos to the Supreme Junta of Government at Seville, transmitted by that general to General Blake, has been this day received from Mr. Stuart at Corunna. It states that on July 20 Dupont's immediate division, consisting of 12,000 men,[1] with all their arms, artillery, baggage, and generals, surrendered prisoners of war to General Castanos, and that 8,000 French troops afterwards surrendered to him, *on condition of being sent to France by sea*, so that no French troops remain in Andalusia. It

[1] Speaking of the battle of Baylen, Mr. Ross greatly underrates this victory over Dupont by the Spaniards. Eighteen thousand French soldiers laid down their arms by order of their incapable commander. The Spaniards violated the convention, and kept many of the French prisoners of war, or suffered them to be massacred in cold blood. Eighty French officers suffered death in this manner.—Napier, vol. i. p. 124.

appears that actions had taken place previous to the surrender, of which actions the particulars have not yet been received.

Sir Arthur Wellesley landed his army at Figueras on the 27th. General Junot had called in most of his advanced posts, and Loison had retreated into Lisbon.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 10, 1808.

We have accounts from Stuart to-day of the 4th. He mentions having received a letter from Captain Carroll (who is with General Blake), dated the 2nd, informing him that M. Bessieres is retreating, and that a small advanced guard of General Blake's army is following him, and has already killed and wounded several of his men, besides making some prisoners. Several Frenchmen have deserted. Blake's army is in good spirits; that general remains with his army in the strong position he occupies on the hills. Captain Carroll writes that it is not yet clear whether Bessieres' retreat is a *feint* to draw Blake from his stronghold, or whether it is with a view to concentrate the French troops at Burgos. In the meantime the provisions which Bessieres had collected at Astorga have fallen into Blake's possession. General Cuesta is at Salamanca with his cavalry.

Captain Carroll sends, *as a report*, that the French troops are evacuating Madrid.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 15, 1808.

We have a letter from Lord Collingwood to-day, confirming the surrender of Dupont. His lordship had not time to send off the details. The force that has actually surrendered is 14,000 men besides those killed and taken by the peasants. Castanos was induced to agree to the sending off a division to France by sea from having intercepted a letter to Dupont directing him to proceed to Madrid. We have also a letter from Sir Arthur Wellesley of the 1st. He was landing at the mouth of the Mondego river. He says that, as he is aware of the army under General Burrand being to join him, he shall not precipitate his measures. He had distributed 5,000 stand of arms. General Spencer was on the 2nd off l'Isle dos Caes, proceeding to join Sir Arthur.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1808.

Your Lordship will, I am sure, partake in our joy at the glorious news received last night. Colonel Browne (who was sent out on a mission to Portugal) arrived in the evening with an account of Sir Arthur Wellesley's having gained *two* victories[1] over the French. For the particulars which are yet known I must refer your

[1] Those of Morica on the 17th, and Vimiero on the 21st of August, over Junot and Laborde, a most able soldier. In the former the French lost 600 killed and wounded. The latter was a complete victory, marred by the arrival, during the battle, of Sir Harry Burrand, who, superseding Sir Arthur Wellesley, prevented the pursuit of the defeated enemy. The French lost thirteen guns and above 2,000 men.

Lordship to the papers, and content myself with adding that Sir A. Wellesley conducted himself most ably and bravely; he was always where the fire was hottest, and is perfectly adored by the troops.

Junot harangued his men before the battle of the 21st. He told them that they had nothing left but to defend themselves bravely: they had the enemy in front, and the sea in their rear; but all would not do. Our troops suffered the French to advance within twenty paces, and then charged them with the bayonet, which they could not withstand. Colonel Browne says our whole loss is 1,100 men—400 in the first battle, and 700 in the second; the proportion of our killed is *small* in comparison. Colonel Stuart, Colonel Lake, and another are the principal officers. Captain Herbert is slightly wounded. Colonel Browne adds that our wounded and the prisoners were embarked to be sent home before he left Portugal. He was coming with the news of the first victory, but was detained by contrary winds. General Kellerman, who commanded the reserve, had sent in a flag of truce just before Colonel Browne came away; he is ignorant of its precise object. We were all at dinner at Mr. Canning's (where were the Duke of Portland and the Spanish Deputies) when Colonel Browne was announced about nine o'clock. Our claret was the better flavoured by this intelligence.

The news from Spain this moment received is good. The French have spiked their cannon at Burgos and are now retreating. They got into part of Saragossa on the 4th, but were forced to evacuate it on the 13th, leaving cannon, ammunition, &c., behind, and are retreating through Navarre.

What looks best of all is, that the different leading persons in Spain see now the necessity of some central authority, and are pressing for a meeting of the Deputies from the different Juntas early next month.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 15, 1808.

An officer is at length arrived from Portugal, and I am sorry to say the account he brings is not what we had a right to expect. A capitulation[1] has been signed by which the French troops are to evacuate Portugal, taking with them their *baggage* (plunder will of course be included), and the Russian fleet is to come *here*, to remain *during the war*. This is all I have heard. I do not know the date, or a word more, or who brings the account.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 16, 1808.

The few words I wrote to your Lordship yesterday contained the substance of the news just received. I was wrong, however, in designating the instrument by which the terms have been granted to the enemy as a capitulation (one might have expected such a word would have been an appropriate one after our first brilliant successes); it was a *convention*, by which the enemy are *not* to be considered as prisoners of war. I must leave the generals to tell their own story in the 'Gazette' (which will not I fear come out in time for

[1] The Convention of Cintra.

to-night's post), as I really should be ashamed to become their apologist. The guns, however, were fired last night, but I am sorry to say everybody seems wofully disappointed.

We have a hope of receiving some consolation from the Baltic. The Swedish mail which arrived this morning brings an account that eight or nine sail of Swedes, and two of British, under Sir S. Hood, have chased the Russian fleet into Baltic Port, and that they are only waiting for the arrival of Sir J. Saumarez (who was not very far off) to attack them, as the port is without defence. I do assure you we want this, to put us on our legs again.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 1, 1808.

A messenger arrived from Madrid this morning. He left it on the 15th, arrived at Corunna on the 21st, and sailed on the 23rd. What the political news is, I have not heard; and indeed all I have heard, or what seems to be known, is that Blake had been defeated at Reynosa on the 13th, and that the Asturias suffered much, but that he had rallied his troops, to the amount of 20,000, and that he was at San Vincente (which town appears to me somewhat doubtful) and meant to proceed to the kingdom of Leon. The messenger saw General Baird at Astorga, where he had seven regiments. He met the cavalry on their march from Corunna to the latter place. Of Sir John Moore we know nothing. It is said that the French are at Santander, but that our stores have been saved, and that Romana has taken the command of

Blake's army. The messenger came by Benavente, and saw nothing of the French. I can hardly think therefore that they were advanced so far as Valladolid, which the *first bad* account stated to be the case. I feel how unsatisfactory this account is, but I cannot make it more clear; still it does not seem quite so bad as the first rumour would have made us believe.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, December 2, 1808.

The accounts received to-day are very bad. Hunter writes from Gijon on the 26th ult. that Romana had been attacked at St. Vincenza (a place near the coast to which he had retreated after Blake's defeat) and defeated, and it was supposed was gone towards the kingdom of Leon, but no particulars are given. Hunter is in such apprehension of the French coming to Gijon that he is embarking his family in the transports there. The officer who arrived comes from Sir D. Baird. All I hear is that Sir D. Baird writes despondingly, and states that a junction between his army and that of General Moore is *impossible*. Having given the bad side, I must mention, though I dare not believe it, that Hunter adds at the end of his letter that he had learnt a report that Romana had, subsequently to his defeat, rallied his men and gained a victory over the French.

The vessel which brings the accounts to-day was hailed by the 'Minerva' frigate, which is cruising off that coast, and received from her a similar report.

1809.

The oppression of Napoleon's rule in Germany raised in this year another coalition against him, but he defeated the Austrians at Echmuhl, Ratisbonne, and Wagram, and took Vienna. His continental system, his treatment of the Pope (Pius VII.) by whom he was excommunicated, and his repeated conscriptions, were gradually destroying his prestige and impressing upon the British Government more and more the conviction that a war with him *à l'outrance* was the only policy which could save England and the rest of Europe from this scourge. The successors of Pitt no longer saw in the war a conflict with France, but a personal duel with its Emperor.

The Ministry in England was broken up on October 30, 1809, and Mr. Perceval succeeded to the Duke of Portland. The duel of Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning deprived the country for a time of their services, and Lord Wellesley undertook the Foreign Department. A very full account of these transactions will be found in the correspondence of this year.

Our army in Spain under Sir A. Wellesley gained great victories on the Douro and at Talavera.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, January 6, 1809.

We have three French bulletins to-day. They come down to the 13th ult., and announce the capitulation (on favourable conditions) of Rosas.[1] They state that we had six sail of the line off that port, who embarked all the garrison but 2,000 men. The rest of the bulletins I do not think bad. Buonaparte is at a league from Madrid, where he lives *for the sake* of enjoying the fine weather. The constituted authorities of Madrid have waited on him with congratulations, &c., but I understand that the bulletins further say that Buonaparte has declared that, if Spain does not recognise his brother Joseph, he will annex her to France as *a province*, and govern it himself.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, January 13, 1809.

I believe I mentioned in mine of this morning the defection of Morla. Of the truth of it I cannot entertain a doubt. This is one of the terrible arms which Buonaparte knows so well how to wield. It is not so much the loss of one man that I regret, as the spirit of distrust which it scatters so widely and most probably so fatally. I hear another bad piece of news to-day, of which we have no particulars, but which we cannot doubt; that *General Vives* has been defeated, by which the siege of Barcelona has been raised. This will

[1] A Spanish town and fort on the south coast of Spain.

render of no avail, or rather almost impossible, any operations in the east of Spain with Barcelona and Cadiz. A stand might have been made if Spain had energy enough left to make one, but of this I every day lose more and more all hope and expectation. The north, I think, is quite gone from us. The King of Sweden has solicited of General Bexhoven a prolongation of the armistice, and in a way which I think must lead to submission to the terms dictated by Russia. I do not know that there will be any great harm to us in getting rid (honourably on our part) of so wrongheaded an ally.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, January 21, 1809.

Since closing my letter I have heard that French bulletins have been received at the Admiralty. They are the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, and 24th; the last is dated the 2nd inst. from Astorga, where Buonaparte arrived on the 1st, and which General Moore had left the preceding day. The 21st, 22nd, and 23rd bulletins give an account of our retreat and the movements of the French army, say that they have taken much baggage, that our German troops desert, and that the weather is very bad. 'We suffer, but the English suffer more.' Romana's army is represented as annihilated; he has not more than 5,000 men with him, who have thrown themselves into Astorga. The 24th bulletin, from Astorga, states that the road from Benavente was covered with dead horses and baggage; that General Colbert, who commands the advanced guard, had made

2,000 prisoners (I do not believe them to be English); that the Duke of Dalmatia is charged with the glorious task of driving us into the sea; that General St. Cyr had entered Barcelona, and that the Duke of Cornegliano had got possession at Saragossa of Monte Terrero, with little loss. General Valence had passed the Tagus at Almarez. Much exultation is expressed at the materials afforded to us for His Majesty's Speech. General Moore[1] is ridiculed for his folly in having so long remained stationary, and for making a forward movement when too late to be of use.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, January 23, 1809.

Lord Paget[2] arrived late yesterday evening with an account of an attack made by the French, on Monday last, on a part of our army at Corunna, in which the French were driven back after a contest of three hours. Sir John Moore was killed during the action, and Sir David Baird lost an arm. The 'Morning Post' will give your lordship the details at present known, as the official despatches have not been received as yet. Lord Paget was embarked with a part of the army before the action commenced. It continued till dusk. Our troops displayed their usual gallantry. Before Lord Paget left the fleet, all our army except 3,100 men were embarked. In the night of Monday to Tuesday, Lord Paget saw from shipboard a heavy firing from the heights, from which he concludes that the enemy

[1] Moore's conduct is amply explained and vindicated by Napier.
[2] Afterwards Field-Marshal the Marquis of Anglesea.

were attacking this small corps, but he says that unless they are great bunglers they may be able to get off. Sir John Moore was struck on the breast by a cannon-ball, which took off part of his breast and his arm : he lived for some hours. Sir David Baird it is said cannot live. It is not possible to get a list of the killed and wounded at present. I understand our whole loss does not exceed 500 men.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES, COLDSTREAM GUARDS, TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Nile' Transport, Cove Harbour, February 10, 1809.

As I see by the papers you are rather anxious in England for our expedition, I flatter myself you will not be sorry to hear that we are most of us safe in different ports of this part of Ireland. We have certainly been rather unfortunate in our weather, as ever since the third day of our sailing we have been beating about in almost a perpetual gale of wind.

However, I trust very little damage has been sustained, and that we shall still be able to proceed, if not to our original destination, to some other.

At present we are expecting to go to Minorca, but of this you are of course better informed than I am.

You may easily conceive our astonishment at finding, on our arrival at this place, that the troops we were expecting to join in Spain had been in England almost as long as we had left it. Of news I shall say nothing. It is, however, some consolation to see that, though unfortunate,[1] our army has (all things considered) not disgraced itself.

[1] Referring to Sir John Moore's campaign, and the retreat to Corunna.

MR. ROSS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, April 1, 1809.

I have but little to say in the way of news, but that little is far from bad. We have good accounts of Romana; he has pushed on with his troops, had a smart skirmish with the enemy at Villa Franca, in which he was successful, and has pushed on into the Asturias, where he remained when the accounts came away. Sir Arthur Wellesley is appointed to the command of the combined British and Portuguese army: the former amounts at this moment to 20,000 men. He will set off early next week.

P.S.—The true version of what your Lordship will probably read in the papers of Buonaparte's having attempted to poniard Massena is, that they and Berthier were shooting at Rambouillet, that the shot of one of the fowling-pieces struck Massena (not, I believe, to do him any material injury), and that Buonaparte immediately called out, 'Ce n'étoit pas moi, c'étoit Berthier qui l'a fait.'

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Sacavem, April 2, 1809.

On the 30th of December, 1808, the 2nd Brigade of Guards, under Major-General H. Campbell, was embarked at Ramsgate, and we sailed on the following morning for Portsmouth, where the remainder of the expedition, consisting of the 87th and 88th Regiments, some artillery horses and stores, and detachments for several regiments in the Peninsula, were rendezvoused.

After kicking our heels in that delightful town, and being nearly devoured by bugs for about a week, General Sherbrooke arrived and took the command.

We weighed anchor with about 90 sail of transports, under convoy of the 'Niobe' and 'Isis,' and ran down Channel with a fair wind, expecting to be disembarked at Vigo or Corunna, and to join the army under Sir John Moore. On the third day after leaving Portsmouth the wind shifted directly in our teeth, and after beating about in the Bay of Biscay for nearly six weeks in as bad weather as is often met with, the fleet was completely dispersed by a violent hurricane, and was obliged to make the best of the way to the nearest port, which was then the Cove of Cork.

Some few, however, ran into Waterford, and one or two to Plymouth, owing to which circumstance it was not till nearly the end of February that the whole could be collected at Cove. On our arrival at the last-named place we first heard of the termination of Sir John Moore's unfortunate campaign, and of the total abandonment of the north of Spain by our army. This of course gave a new turn to our speculations as to the destination of our expedition, and from the hints of the bigwigs Cadiz was set down as the first port we were likely to make.

After having been fleeced most unmercifully by the worthy inhabitants of Cove, we sailed on the 2nd of March, and nothing could be more delightful than the weather we now experienced; but still we were unfortunate, for about the 7th inst. the 'Prince George' transport, the head-quarter ship of the Coldstream regiment, contrived to run down an American brig detained the

day before by the 'Isis,' and that ship bearing down in a great hurry to assist her prize, ran foul of the poor 'Prince George' and very nearly returned her the compliment she had just paid the Yankee.

On the first shock, two of the officers and about fifty men of the Coldstreams jumped into the 'Isis,' and poor Ensign Long, a most amiable young man, in attempting to do the same thing, was unfortunately drowned; the drummer also shared the same fate.

After this accident nothing particular occurred, excepting the capture of a French brig of 18 guns, which had contrived to run across the bows of the 'Niobe' one morning, at daybreak, and was taken after a short chase.

When we arrived off Cape St. Vincent, on the 9th of March, we fell in with one of the frigates belonging to Admiral Purvis's squadron at Cadiz, which frightened us not a little by information of the French fleet being somewhere in this part of the world, and we were still farther alarmed when, on being ordered to come within hail of the Commodore, we were especially informed of this circumstance, and directed to make the best of our way to Cadiz. Had we at that moment known the actual situation of this formidable fleet, which was closely blockaded in the Basque Roads, and probably in quite as great a fright as ourselves, it would have spared us a very unpleasant twenty-four hours. The next day, however, to our great joy, we arrived safe at Cadiz, but were not a little astonished to find that our firm and valiant allies, the Spaniards, had not yet sufficient confidence in our good intentions to admit British troops into the town. We found, from the

pilots who came on board, that the general idea was that they had troops enough, not only to defend themselves, but to conquer all France, if they chose; and that all they wanted was arms and ammunition, and that, consequently, the sooner we went about our business the better.

Thus, after laying to for a few hours, and enjoying the prospect of the bay and town of Cadiz, and the opposite shore, which is certainly one of the most beautiful sights possible to conceive of the sort, we had the supreme felicity of putting to sea again, with all our alarms of the Brest fleet in full force, and the prospect of having to beat back to Lisbon. However, at this moment the wind shifted directly round, and on the evening of the 12th we arrived in the Tagus.

Nothing could be more beautiful than our entrance into this river. The weather was delightful, and the perfume of the orange groves on the banks, to an English nose (particularly one *accustomed* but not *reconciled* to the odour of bilge water), was quite heavenly. We found, on landing, that the inhabitants were far from sanguine. Marshal Beresford had established his head-quarters at Thomar, but his army was a nominal one, consisting solely of Portuguese, ill armed and worse organized. Sir John Craddock, the Commander-in-Chief, had detached 2,500 men a few days before to Cadiz, whom we had by some means missed falling in with, and who were of course obliged to return. He remained at Lisbon with the remainder, amounting to about 5,000 men, and the prevailing idea was that the country must be speedily evacuated.

Soult was said to be advancing from Galicia towards

Oporto, with a force estimated at 15 or 16,000 men, and Victor was near, with upwards of 20,000. Cuesta, however, had nearly 35,000 in the neighbourhood of Medellin, but very little reliance was placed on his army. The accession of our force rather improved the situation of affairs, as when the troops sent to Cadiz were returned, Sir John Craddock would have towards 12,000 men, and General Hill was expected from Cork with 3 or 4,000 more. Still, however, this was not deemed sufficient to withstand Soult and Victor, and the wise men wore very long faces. The Portuguese appeared very hearty in the cause, and were drilling in earnest, but I do not think they had much hope of success, or confidence in our determination not to forsake them. The brigade of Guards was disembarked at Belem on the 13th of March, and went into barracks in that town, which (having been occupied by a battalion of the German Legion) were in the most filthy state possible to imagine.

The officers were billeted in the vicinity, and it was some days before anything like tolerable quarters could be procured, as we were in many instances sent to houses where there were already five or six inhabitants to every room.

Those only who are acquainted with the dirt and stink of the middling and lower orders of the Portuguese, more especially at Belem, can form an opinion of the comfort of such quarters. This was much increased by the gross intemperance of the troops, who being for the first time in a wine country, and where they could get dead drunk for a few *vintems*, exhibited the most distressing proofs of ill conduct; and this was

not confined to the bad characters, but entirely pervaded the brigade, and I believe there was hardly a non-commissioned officer or private who was not brutally intoxicated once or twice during the first week. The greater part were constantly so, and it was not till the end of the next month that we could at all get the better of this practice, although the severest examples were constantly made, and no less than 27 men were actually flogged one morning for being drunk on duty. After remaining in barracks at Belem for about a week, we marched on the 21st to this place, Sacavem, a very pleasant village on the banks of the Tagus, about eight miles from Lisbon, where we were much more comfortably situated than at Belem. The remainder of the army was cantoned in the different villages in the vicinity, and head-quarters were nominally established at Lumiar.

The ground round Sacavem presents a formidable position to an enemy who should attempt approaching Lisbon by the left bank of the Tagus, and some batteries were commenced for the purpose of strengthening it. We found most of the quintas empty, some of their owners having run away *with*, but by far the greater number *from*, the French, and were either living at Lisbon, or had accompanied the Prince Regent to the Brazils.

Their houses we of course occupied, and though there was a plentiful scarcity of anything like furniture, still, being empty, we liked them far better than those we had just left.

Intelligence of the capture and pillage of Oporto, after a trifling resistance, by the force under Soult, was

now received, and this joined to the complete annihilation of Cuesta's army at Medellin, which we had heard, a few days before, made us look rather blue; and so entirely was it the prevailing idea that we should soon be forced to re-embark, that very few of the officers brought up any baggage with them, from Lisbon, which they could possibly manage to do without.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Coimbra, May 3, 1809.

It having been ascertained that Soult's corps did not exceed 12,000 or 13,000 men, and that in spite of Victor's success he was not in a condition to advance, Sir John Craddock boldly resolved to venture a little nearer the enemy; and on the 9th of April the army was put in motion, and we halted that night at Alhaura, a village about twelve English miles from Sacavem, on the banks of the Tagus. The next day we marched about the same distance to Villa Nova, and the following day reached Alcoentre, a small town famous for the superior size and activity of the fleas and bugs it produces. On the 15th we arrived at Rio Major, where we remained very quietly till the 21st, on which day we again moved forward, and made a long march to the famous convent of Batalha, certainly one of the finest in Portugal. It was built by John I., to commemorate a victory obtained by him over the Moors near that spot. The monks were extremely hospitable, and we sat down, about thirty officers of the Guards, in a most magnificent refectory.

The contrast of the red coats and the white gowns

of the monks (who *all* waited on us), together with the peculiar circumstances of the case, formed a very impressive and striking scene. This was the fourth large military party they had entertained during the space of a twelvemonth, Junot having honoured them with *his* company when he commanded in Portugal. Sir A. Wellesley made it his head-quarters one night previous to the battle of Vimiero, and the holy fathers did not seem to be quite satisfied that their next guests would not be French again. They were, however, not sparing of their genuine and unadulterated port, and most of us rose from table *rather* more exhilarated than when we sat down.

The monks afterwards showed us over the interior of the different chapels, which were certainly magnificent; and, as a great favour, opened the tomb of their founder, Don John I., whose body they have managed to preserve dry, in great perfection, and some few of us shook hands with him very cordially.[1]

The following day we moved to Leyria, a remarkably clean and handsome town, in which and the vicinity nearly the whole of the army was collected, and the principal magazine formed. It had been the opinion of the major part of the generals that this country would not be able to support even our small force for any time, but that illusion was now almost dispelled.

Still, however, nothing but croaking was to be heard, and very few hopes were entertained of our being able to carry on even defensive operations. Hourly intelli-

[1] The French have since destroyed as much of this convent as would burn, and played at *football* with poor Don John's head.—Note by the writer.

gence of Soult's advance from Oporto was looked for, in which case I believe Sir John would have retreated to Lisbon with all possible expedition.

On the 26th we received the joyful information of the arrival of Sir Arthur Wellesley in the Tagus, and his appointment to the command of the army was notified by Sir John Craddock in a very pathetic farewell address on the following day. On the 29th we received orders to march instantly towards Coimbra, where almost the whole were assembled by the 1st of May.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, May 10, 1809.

We have no further accounts to-day of what is going on in Germany or Italy, but we have letters from Lisbon of the 25th ult. and from Seville of the 15th. The most important fact from the former place is the arrival of Sir Arthur Wellesley on the 24th. He would proceed within a day or two to take the command of the army. Soult is supposed to have with him 12,000 men in all, but many of these must be left behind should he advance (which he had not done on the 25th), in order to garrison the places in his rear. Sir A. Wellesley was received with enthusiasm; there was a general illumination, &c.

Mr. Villiers[1] seems to think that with good management and adequate efforts the Peninsula may shortly be liberated. Victor's army (supposed to be about 33,000) was in the neighbourhood of Badajoz; he was preparing

[1] Employed at Lisbon.

to besiege it. Cuesta was rallying his men and collecting reinforcements.

I do not find that Victor had pushed on any of his corps to the southward.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, May 13, 1809.

We have accounts this morning from Heligoland to the 6th inst., bringing intelligence from the continent to the 3rd. It appears by these that the insurrection in Hesse has been quelled. I say for the moment, because it does not appear that any of the chiefs have been taken, nor many of the insurgents killed. Nicholas mentions a report of the march of 10,000 Russians towards Magdeburg: their design is not avowed, but he seems to think it was to endeavour to surprise that fortress, and *preter la main* to the Hessian insurrection. The same person transmits another account, which he says he has on good private authority, and of which he hopes to transmit a confirmation by the next packet: it is that on the 22nd General Bellegarde, after two days' fighting, had defeated the French at Ainberg (which town was destroyed), and had pushed on to Urertzburgh. We have also letters from Linz to the 25th; they bring a complete confirmation of the news of the victory in Italy. The French army under Beauharnais consisted of five divisions. The Archduke John crossed the Tagliamento and attacked them on the 15th and 16th at Sacille, and compelled them to retreat over the Livenza, which not being defensible, they have further retreated across the Piave with the

loss of 6,000 prisoners (amongst which were two generals) and 16 pieces of cannon. Their killed and wounded is not less than the number made prisoners. Our Linz correspondent attributes the retreat of the Archduke Charles over the Danube to the ill-judged retreat (for he says it was not necessary) of the Archduke Louis (who appears to have been wounded). The Archduke Louis fought well at Eckmuhl, but thought it advisable to fall back on Landshut; he was attacked in the defiles near that place, and his army suffered a good deal. Whilst this was going on, on his side the Archduke Charles was completely successful, and it was only by the French receiving a reinforcement from the army which had been engaged with the Archduke Louis that they were saved from a total defeat. The Archduke's plan is to endeavour to recross the Danube a little to the eastward of the Tver. The account adds that nothing but the Archduke Louis's having fallen back could have prevented the Archduke Charles from gaining a complete victory. The Emperor of Austria is at Ems. The person who writes this letter says that the Prince of Orange (who is at Linz) tells him that it is reported the King of Saxony has been carried off from Dresden either to Nacconbourg or Weissenfells for having refused to agree to some of Bernadotte's demands, one of which was, that French troops should be allowed to garrison Konigstein.

The news of Bellegarde's success at Aenberg is also mentioned by persons just arrived from Holland.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Oporto, May 25, 1809.

Early in May the outposts were pushed on very nearly to the Vouga, which was then the advanced post of the French army. Major-General McKenzie was detached with his division to Alcantara and Abrantes for the purpose of watching Victor. We (Guards) arrived early at Coimbra, and our entry into that town (which is the third in point of size in Portugal) was certainly one of the finest and most impressive sights I ever beheld. Every window and balcony of the streets we marched up was absolutely crammed with spectators, and holy water and dried rose leaves were thrown in such plentiful profusion as almost to drown and smother us.

This, joined to the perpetual huzzas and Viva los Ingleses, completed the effect of a scene which will not I am sure be easily forgotten by those present.

This advance gave rather a new turn to our ideas, and we began to consider whether, instead of Soult's attacking us, it was not equally probable that we might attack him.

The big wigs were, however, much inclined to prognosticate evil, and censured this movement as rash in the extreme, as they considered our retreat as being sure to be cut off by Victor's corps. Sir Arthur Wellesley arrived at Coimbra on the 5th, inspected the troops on the 7th, and the next morning Marshal Beresford with the Portuguese and the squadrons of British cavalry moved forward with the utmost rapid-

ity towards the Douro, on the road to Lamego, and on the 9th the whole army advanced from Coimbra towards Oporto, and on the following morning Sir Arthur surprised the French advanced posts at Albergaria on the Vouga, and had it not been for some misunderstanding on the part of the British cavalry, would certainly have cut off a very considerable body of infantry and nearly the whole of the cavalry belonging to Soult's corps. As it was but little loss was sustained on either side. The advance of our army, and the rear of the enemy's advanced posts were partially engaged the whole day.

A smart skirmish took place on the heights of Grijon, from which the German legion under General Murray, assisted by the 16th regiment of Portuguese, drove the French in very good style. Our cavalry behaved extremely well on the 11th, and a very considerable number of prisoners were taken ; the enemy's advanced posts were driven into Oporto that night and they destroyed the bridge of boats across the Douro at the same time. The whole of the British army bivouacked within a few miles of the river that night.

Sir Arthur, however, was determined to attempt the passage of the river if possible on the following day, the 12th, and for this purpose General Murray was detached at daybreak with the German brigade to endeavour to collect boats, about three miles above the town ; and Sir Arthur having at the same time discovered a spot half a mile from the town where a few men might be passed over unseen, and having collected a few boats which the enemy had neglected to secure, three companies of the Buffs under Major General

Paget, crossed without being perceived, and took post in a large unfinished convent on the opposite side.

During this time, owing to the extraordinary circumstance of Soult's neglecting to watch his own side of the river, the Portuguese came over with great numbers of boats, and by their enthusiastic exertions the whole of General Hill's division was passed over just in time to support the Buffs, who, having incautiously discovered themselves by firing at some straggling party, were in a most perilous situation, having to sustain for upwards of an hour an attack from at least ten times their numbers.

This, however, they most gallantly maintained, and not only kept their own ground but actually became themselves the assailants.

During this time, poor General Paget received a musket ball in his arm, which broke it in two places, and obliged him to quit the field and suffer amputation. The instant General Hill's division landed, the enemy began to retire, but for a short time the action was pretty warm, though from the nature of the ground, number of walls &c., the troops could only act as *tirailleurs*. The brigade of Guards were at this moment formed on the heights of Villa Nova on the left bank, and completely overlooked the field of battle at little more than three-quarters of a mile distance, which had the effect of a panorama, and we certainly saw more of the action than those who were engaged.

As soon as the boats had landed General Hill's division they returned for General Sherbrook's, and the brigade of Guards and a squadron of the 14th Dragoons crossed over.

We landed on nearly the centre of the quay, and although the companies had been completely mixed in getting into the boats, yet the brigade was formed on landing without the smallest confusion and in almost an instant, in a manner which I cannot even now comprehend, as of all possible situations this appeared the most likely to cause delay and confusion.

We instantly moved in column up the principal street, through the centre of the town of Oporto, having been preceded a few minutes by the 29th, who had left us many specimens of their gallantry, the street being full of dead and dying Frenchmen and horses together with guns, tumbrils, &c. Our movement through Oporto presented a most interesting and animating spectacle.

The windows, balconies, and tops of houses were crowded with men, women, and children, who by huzzaing, waving their hats, handkerchiefs, &c., testified their joy and anxiety for our success. Even the latticed windows of the nunneries were thrown open and the sacred, though certainly not very fascinating, visages of their antiquated inhabitants exposed to view for our encouragement.

The streets were filled with dead and dying, a sharp action in which we were hoping soon to bear a part was going on a few hundred paces in front, and altogether it was certainly a most glorious moment, the remembrance of which will never be effaced from the minds of most of those who were present.

As soon as the head of our column made its appearance beyond the town, the French went off in great confusion, and had it been possible to have brought up

the cavalry (which, however, it was not) our success would probably have been very complete. A very considerable number of prisoners were taken by a gallant charge of the squadron of the 14th, which, however, suffered materially itself at the same time. Major-General Murray's division effected their passage at the point intended, and the head of his column showed itself on the enemy's left flank, nearly at the same time as we turned his right, and no doubt materially contributed to determine Soult to retreat with all possible dispatch. Our army was too much fatigued to pursue far, and besides this our artillery and most of the cavalry was on the other side of the river. As soon as the enemy was out of sight we returned to Oporto for the night. Thus after a march of upwards of eighty-four miles in three days and a half, the greater part of which time the outposts had been constantly engaged, we had succeeded in the extraordinary military feat of crossing the river, extremely rapid and upwards of 300 yards wide, in boats by small detachments, with an enemy of nearly equal force on the opposite bank, a circumstance which has scarcely its parallel, and proves beyond a doubt the very superior quickness and energy of the officers who commanded. The effect of the successful passage of the Douro on the minds of both the men and officers of our army has been most marked, and general confidence and goodwill has taken the place of a certain degree of gloominess and disposition to croak which was before prevalent; and we now began to consider whether it was not very

possible to *out manœuvre* as well as *out fight* the French.

This passage of the Douro was apparently a most hazardous and daring attempt, but the very peculiar circumstances of the case justified it. Sir Arthur well knew that Soult's corps was in such a state of disorganisation, and indeed of *mutiny*, as to render it very little to be feared. A regular correspondence had been for some weeks established between a considerable number of discontented officers (some of them of rank) in the French army and the British Head Quarters. Soon after Marshal Beresford established himself at Thomar he received by a peasant a communication from a French General of division, stating that the corps under Soult were determined on revolt, and that they believed the whole of the French army, both in the Peninsula and Germany were ready to follow their example.

Their object in making this communication was not (they said) to obtain our assistance, but simply to engage not to molest them on their retreat, their intention being to march straight to *Paris*, proclaiming themselves in a state of open revolt, in which they calculated on being joined by the rest of the army. They had even gone so far as to propose this plan to General L—— who commanded a separate corps near Sarragoza, and who had agreed to join them.

Marshal Beresford having desired that some officer should be sent from the French with whom he could confer, a captain of Hussars (Argenteau) was selected by the malcontents for this purpose, who came repeatedly disguised as a peasant from the French outposts on the Vouga, both to Thomar and to Lisbon. In the course

of this business something having been said by Beresford as to the practicability of re-establishing the Bourbons in the event of Buonaparte's overthrow, the conspirators were so indignant that an abrupt termination was nearly put to the negotiation. Their idea seemed to be that Buonaparte from his ambition and love of war had very nearly and probably would quite ruin and depopulate France, and they fancied some counterpoise, formed a ridiculous scheme of bringing Moreau from America, and placing him at the head of a council of war. It was very easy to foresee the fate of these visionary ideas, and Sir Arthur took care to reap the only benefit which could accrue from them, viz. to procure an exact return of the force and position of the corps under Soult's orders, and the event fully justified him.

About the beginning of the month young L—— (who probably never heartily joined in this intended rebellion) came in great haste to Oporto, and after obtaining the most solemn assurances from Soult that no punishments should follow the disclosure, he informed him of the plan as far as he was acquainted with it. Fortunately for the conspirators he had never been entrusted with any names; it was, however, discovered that Argenteau had been several times absent from his regiment, and he was in consequence arrested on the 9th, and letters, &c. found on him sufficiently clear to convict *him*, but not to discover his accomplices.

As it was to be presumed that he must have had the leave of the commanding officer of his regiment, he also was arrested, and on their refusing to make any disclosures both were ordered by Soult to be shot. Owing,

however, to some peculiar circumstances their execution was postponed to the 12th, on which day we so unexpectedly entered Oporto. What became of the colonel I never heard, but Argenteau was sent off under an escort towards Braga, and taking advantage of a favourable moment, he contrived to make his escape, and came galloping into our lines during the action, and actually dined that day with Sir Arthur on the very dinner which Soult had that morning ordered for himself.* The enemy continued their retreat the whole of the night of the 12th on the road towards Amaranthe, and abandoned most of their artillery and baggage. Major-General Murray marched with the German Brigade for the purpose of ascertaining their movements. On finding Marshal Beresford in possession of Amaranthe they were obliged to turn back and cross the mountains of Guimeralns, at which place they destroyed all their remaining baggage, &c., and from thence marched (by the most difficult road possible) on to Braga. The 13th instant was employed by Sir Arthur in re-establishing the bridge of boats across the Douro at Oporto, and making the necessary arrangements for the supply of the army on the pursuit. We marched at daybreak on the 14th of May, and reached Villa Nova de Jamahinto that day, and pushed on to Braga the next morning just in time to prevent the French

[1] His end exhibits a very singular instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. After this hairbreadth escape, he went to London; there he remained till the spring of 1810, when he determined to go in disguise to France, for the purpose of bringing over his wife and family. The consequence was he was arrested, and shot the very day week after leaving London. An extraordinary proof of the activity and vigilance of the French police.—Note by the writer.

from obtaining possession of that town. On finding himself turned Marshal Soult determined to make the best of his way into Galicia, and continued his retreat with the utmost precipitation on the road towards Chaves.

After a march of nearly thirty miles over very bad roads and being completely wet through the whole day, which however our having 'a burning scent' prevented our minding, we came up with their rear-guard, consisting of 2,000 infantry and 800 cavalry under General Merle, strongly posted at Salamonde. Immediately in their rear the road divided, one direction leading across the mountains to the bridge of Misirella a mile distant and the other to that of Ruivaens, which was about six miles off.

Being unfortunately obliged to wait for the arrival of our three-pounder brigade, which, owing to the badness of the roads, we had outmarched, it was nearly dark before the arrangements for the attack could be completed. Our light companies then dashed on, and the enemy instantly gave way and set off in the utmost possible state of confusion.

The darkness however befriended them; it was concluded that they would take the road to Ruivaens, and in that direction they were pursued, they went however by Misirella, and by this means the greater part saved themselves. Had we had one hour's more daylight not a man could have escaped. They left us a good number of horses, baggage, knapsacks, &c., the examination of the latter provided very amusing and profitable occupation for our men, as they were literally crammed with every species of plunder, the produce

of the jewellers' and other shops at Oporto. Sacramental cups and plates beat flat to fit the shape of the back, rings of every description.

Trinkets were certainly cheaper in our camp the next morning than I ever knew them before, and both horses and mules were to be had on very reasonable terms. I got two very good ones for a dollar each. We took about 200 prisoners, and I believe the Portuguese peasantry cut the throats of as many more. A serjeant of the 40th Regiment of the French light infantry confessed to me that he thought they were justly served, as since their entrance into Portugal they had not respected either the life or the property of a single individual. We had only one man killed and three wounded in this affair.

The next morning, May 16, orders were sent by Sir Arthur Wellesley to General Silveira directing him to destroy the bridges of Misirella and Ruivaens and to endeavour by every possible means to obstruct the retreat of the French. These orders were unfortunately not well obeyed, and the bridge at Ruivaens not completely broken down.[1]

Beresford was also directed to march on Chaves with all possible dispatch, and the most sanguine expectations were entertained by Sir Arthur that not a man of Soult's army would escape. Indeed had his orders been as well executed as they were conceived, the capture or destruction of every man of the enemy was certain. As it was we were only able to come up with their rear-guard at Salamonde on the evening of the

[1] Soult saved his army over this broken bridge, by the intrepid conduct of a French officer, Major Dulong. *Vide* Napier, vol. ii. p. 297.

15th, and even of them we were not able to take more than a few hundred prisoners. Had we got to them one hour earlier the whole would inevitably have been prisoners of war.

We were obliged to halt nearly the whole of the next day to repair the bridge of Ruivaens sufficiently for the passage of our light brigade of three pounders, which was the only artillery now with the army. The enemy threw *their last gun* into the river on passing over the bridge at Misirella.

It was now discovered that they had taken the road to Montalegre, and General Murray with the Germans marched in that direction by a shorter route on the night of the 16th; but owing to the extreme darkness and intricacy of the road his guides lost their way for some hours, and he only arrived at Montalegre in time to see the French rear-guard filing out in great confusion.

The main body of the British Army halted near the town of Ruivaens, and as it was now in vain to hope to bring on a general action, the pursuit was given up. Some few light cavalry however and Silveira's corps continued to harass the enemy for several days, and a few hundred prisoners were taken.

Thus ended a short campaign in which great generalship had certainly been shown on both sides, and which clearly proved the wonderful abilities and activity of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

Soult thought himself extremely fortunate in making his escape with the loss of the whole of his artillery and baggage, and at least one-third of his army.[1]

[1] The mortality and casualties in Soult's corps were enormous. Previous to the battle of Corunna it amounted to 26,000 effective men. Of this

During the whole of their retreat through the north of Portugal, the French exhibited proofs of cruelty and barbarity the most wanton and disgraceful. They systematically burnt and destroyed every house and cottage within their reach, and not unfrequently detached small parties to some distance from the roadside for the sole purpose of setting fire to a few miserable hovels. Neither age nor sex were spared, and very few of the peasantry who were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands survived to give an account of their treatment.

In a military or political point of view nothing could be more ill-judged that this proceeding, as hundreds of peasants who would not perhaps have taken an active part in the pursuit were now converted into their most dangerous enemies, and actually formed the advance of our army, and of course showed very little mercy to any unfortunate wretch who fell behind from illness or fatigue.

We halted near Montalegre on the 19th, and were then informed, rather to our discomfiture, that Victor had broken up from near Medellin about the 10th, and was now advancing with 25,000 men to cut off our communication with Lisbon, and that his advanced guard had already reached Castello Branco.

All our original croakers now prophesied the certain fulfilment of their predictions.

We soon however discovered that Sir Arthur was fully prepared for this movement, and that while we

number only 11,000 remained when they quitted Portugal, on May 17, being a loss of 15,000 men in this corps alone, in about six months.—Note by the writer.

had imagined the whole of the army had been in our rear following up Soult, the fact was that a very considerable part had been countermarching on Coimbra. We returned to Ruivaens on the following day (the 20th), and arrived at Oporto on the 24th, having marched nearly 280 miles in a fortnight over roads of not the most favourable description. On our arrival at Oporto we were not a little astonished to find that head-quarters were actually already at Coimbra and that some troops had marched from thence on the road to Condeixa. Sir Arthur having thus driven Soult from Oporto into Galicia and returned to Coimbra, a distance of 320 miles, in sixteen days, a rapidity of movement rarely if ever equalled.

The army was undoubtedly rather fagged, but a halt of three or four days set us on our legs again.

Silviera was left to secure the passes of the Tras os Montez, and Colonel Trant, who had rendered very essential service with the corps of Coimbra Students, was appointed Governor of Oporto, and set about organizing the Militia and repairing the fortifications of that place with great activity.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Punhete, June 12, 1809.
Received H. C. July 9.

Though I can tell you nothing but old news, yet as I know that even that is in some degree interesting, I will not let pass this opportunity of giving you some account of our proceedings since we entered Oporto on May 24.

I am afraid that greater expectations were formed in England than have since been realised, indeed to say the truth I believe the whole army here expected that more would have been done than has actually taken place, for it is quite impossible for any plans to have been better laid or, to all appearance, with more certainty of success than Sir Arthur's, and had they been in every instance well executed, I believe very few of Soult's army would have escaped. The first day we came in contact we should certainly have cut off the greater part of the enemy's cavalry, had not the horses of one squadron been unfortunately blown, or the soldiers' spurs worn out, I don't know which.

Near Montalegre an unfortunate mistake took place, or a general engagement must have followed, the result of which cannot be doubted. Our brigade, although the most advanced in the pursuit, has only been once under fire, and then only partially, viz. on May 16, at Salamonde, when we overtook the rear-guard of the French, they made a very slight resistance, and we had only three men wounded of the light infantry. They lost about 150 in killed, wounded, and prisoners, and about 80 horses. I got two very good ones for about twelve shillings English. We pursued them very rapidly as far as Montalegre, but finding it impossible to bring up our provisions as fast as we marched, and as all the villages on the road were burnt by the enemy, we could trust to nothing but our own resources. We were obliged, therefore, to halt there, and having received information that Victor was advancing towards Lisbon Sir Arthur determined to prevent his plans, and marched back almost as rapidly as he had advanced,

and had established his head-quarters at Coimbra almost before Victor could receive intelligence of Soult's defeat. I believe there are few instances of more expeditious manœuvres than those which have taken place in this short expedition. The men have marched uncommonly well, and, considering all things, we have a smaller hospital than might be expected. The army is now nearly re-assembled in the neighbourhood of Abrantes (which is about six miles from this place) but how long we shall remain here, or what our future employment may be, I cannot pretend to conjecture.

Victor's army is, I believe, retreating on Madrid, where I suppose the French will concentrate themselves; this leaves the south of Spain free, and I should fancy Cuesta's army might be made very respectable. He is I believe quite incapable of commanding. If the three armies, viz. the British, Portuguese, and Cuesta's, were to effect a junction, they would form a force superior to any the French have together in Spain, but how an army composed of such different materials would act together God only knows.

I must do the Portuguese the justice to say they have conducted themselves extremely well in every point of view, and were they not so uncommonly ignorant and dirty I should feel some esteem for them. Whether they have zeal enough to carry them beyond their own frontiers I do not know; they talk very big on this subject, and fancy, I believe, they shall soon be at Paris. We hear that the Austrians have suffered considerably, and that Buonaparte is at Vienna; if this is true, I only hope they had made up their minds to it, and that we are not to be frightened by one misfor-

time. If the people in Hanover, Hesse, and Westphalia are in arms, which seems certain, I hope Buonaparte is in the most difficult situation, and the further he advances, the worst for himself.

We seem to be going on famously by sea. I hope all this good news will bring the people of England to their senses again, for to say the truth, they seem all going mad at present. I should imagine you are by this time nearly asleep.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

The 'Warspite' off Cherbourg, July 16, 1809.

Our post here not being the most regular one in the world, your letter only came three days ago, and to-morrow will be the first opportunity I have had since of sending you a history of my proceedings. The 'Courageux' and 'Polonais' remain very quiet, they are refitting, but get on slowly. Buonaparte is doing all he can to make Cherbourg a safe anchorage, and if his plans are continued for the next *hundred* years I should think ships may be able to lie there in bad weather. At present the sea breaks over the Cones[1] very often, and the winter before last a battery which had been built on them was washed away with the garrison and everything belonging to it, and it must be a very long time before any large ships can be tolerably secure there except during the summer months. After all it can never contain more than eight or ten sail of the line, and these very much crowded together.

[1] Conical towers on the breakwater.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

July 21, 1809.

Dreadful news. Austrians totally defeated at Ratisbonne after a battle begun on the 6th, and ended on the 8th. The Archduke suffered the French to pass over in the night (from want of vigilance) and to his surprise found them drawn up in order of battle on the plain on the morning of the 6th.

The Austrians have lost 20,000 in prisoners only, and forty pieces of cannon.

The French were expected at Briemm on the 10th.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, July 21, 1809.

I hope the few lines I wrote this morning will have been found legible. I have not yet seen the bulletins (there are two and they came to the Admiralty) but I understand that on the night of the 5th, Buonaparte crossed the Danube with his army, which the Archduke Charles to his great surprise found drawn up in the plain on the morning of 6th.

The battle lasted that and the two following days, and seems to have been decided much in the same way as that of Jena. The French turned the Austrian left flank, and attacked them in their rear. The Austrians thinking their wings in most danger, weakened their centre, which Buonaparte at last succeeded in penetrating. From one expression in the bulletin I am led to think that on one of the days the battle was in favour of

the Austrians; it is this, 'the Archduke Charles was more intent on pursuing a victory than on gaining one.' The loss in prisoners is said to be 20,000, in cannon, 40 pieces (the latter would make one *hope* that the victory was not so complete, for the number is small).

The Archduke has retired into Bohemia, Massena is advancing by Aicholsburg and Davoust by Znaim, so the Archduke is cut off from Hungary. This is all I have been able to collect.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Talavera, July 24, 1809.

On finding much to his surprise that Sir Arthur was at Coimbra when he imagined him to be at Montalegre, Victor retured to his old position.

Cuesta's army was now again re-organised and began to assume a formidable appearance, and as nothing was now to be apprehended in the north of Portugal Sir Arthur determined on forming a junction with Cuesta and attempting the expulsion of the enemy from Spanish Estramadura.

Leaving therefore Marshal Beresford with the Portuguese army (who were rapidly improving in numbers and discipline) to guard the frontier and form a corps of observation to protect his rear and left flank, Sir Arthur moved down towards the Tagus, and the army was assembled in the neighbourhood of Abrantes on June 11.

The fortifications of this town were worked at with great activity, and it was soon put in a very respectable state of defence, and the principal magazine

established there. We remained cantoned in the vicinity of Abrantes till the 27th, during which time every arrangement had been made for the commencement of a new campaign, both by refitting the army with necessaries of all sorts, and settling with Cuesta the plan of operations.

The Spaniards engaged to provide ample means of transport of every kind and description, and to furnish rations to any amount.

On June 27 the whole army was put in motion, and we entered Spain at Zarza Major on July 5. On leaving Abrantes we constantly bivouacked, and no part of the army was cantoned from that time till the end of August. As the weather was delightful we soon reconciled ourselves to this mode of life, and thought a clean hut far preferable to a dirty house. A good tree became now a matter of moment, and on halting the officers took their choice by seniority with the greatest gravity. We halted two days near Zarza Major, during which time General Franciski, who had commanded Soult's cavalry at Oporto (and was dispatched by him to Joseph Buonaparte with an account of his defeat and the mutiny which preceded it) was brought prisoner through our lines, having been waylaid and taken by some Spanish outlaws on his road to Madrid. We continued our march on the 7th, and arrived at Placentia on the 12th, at which place a small hospital and magazine was formed. This is a remarkably clean and pleasant town.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Talavera, July 30, 1809.

We set off on our return to Coimbra on April 28, and after halting one day at Aqueda got to our old quarters on May 3. General Silveira was left with about 4,000 Portuguese for the protection of the Tras os Montez. On our arrival we learned that on Victor's hearing that Sir Arthur's head-quarters were at Coimbra, when he imagined him to be at Montalegre, he had retired after a smart affair at Alcantara, in which the Portuguese behaved remarkably well. Cuesta's corps was again beginning to assume a formidable appearance, and as nothing was now to be apprehended from the enemy in the north of Portugal, Sir Arthur determined on leaving Marshal Beresford with the Portuguese, who were rapidly improving in number and discipline, to guard the frontiers, and to form a junction with Cuesta's corps to attempt the expulsion of the enemy from Spanish Estramadura. Accordingly the troops having now quite recovered their fatigue, and being refitted with shoes &c., we marched from Coimbra on the 6th to Condeiza, on the 7th to Pombal, on the 8th to Lergria, 9th to Aldeda Crux, 10th to Thomar, and on the 11th arrived at Punhete, a small town at the confluence of the Zerere and the Tagus, where we halted. Head-quarters were established at Abrantes, and the remainder of the army was partly in cantonments there and in the neighbouring villages. By the junction with Major General McKenzie's division and

some detachments from England, our army amounts to nearly 20,000 British, and is in the best possible condition and all the better for the last two months' service. The fortifications at Abrantes were worked at with great activity, and the principal magazines established there. Punhete proved a very convenient situation both for the officers and men, as the communication with Lisbon by the Tagus, which is navigable to Abrantes, was regular and enabled us to prepare for a new campaign. Nothing can well be imagined more barren and inhospitable than the country between Abrantes and Castello Branco, the worst part of Salisbury Plain divested of its verdure is rich in comparison. In some places the roads are extremely bad and nothing but light guns can be conveyed. From the period of our leaving Abrantes we constantly bivouacked, and the billhooks came into very active service. At first our men made but awkward huts, but after a short time they became wonderfully expert in this mode of building, and as the weather was beautiful we soon accustomed ourselves to this out-of-doors life, and I have often taken up my quarters in a field in preference to a bad cottage. As everything is by comparison, so now a good tree whose foliage is thick enough to shelter you from the sun is looked on quite as a matter of envy. We remained at Punhete till the 27th, on which day we marched to Abrantes, and on the 28th to San Domingo, fourteen miles, on the 29th to Cardigas, twenty miles, the 30th to Souvereira Formosa, twelve miles, on July 1st Sarzedas, twelve miles, on the 2nd to Castello Branco, eight miles, on the 3rd we went on to Lodveiero, twelve miles, on the 4th we marched to Zabreira, twelve

miles, and on July 5, we entered Spain at Garza la Mayor.

Having on the 17th made every arrangement for the junction with Cuesta, who was moving up from Truxillo, and for the attack of Victor at Talavera de la Reina, the army moved forward from Placentia, and with the exception of the advanced guard under Major-General McKenzie, marched a few leagues on the road to Oraperza. On the 18th we reached Majardos, some twenty miles, on the 19th nearly the same distance to Centinello, and on the following day joined Cuesta at Oraperza, about twenty-five miles further. On the 21st the whole of the Spanish army, about 27,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry, and 50 pieces of artillery, marched by our camp. Sir Arthur inspected the whole of this army by torchlight in the evening. It was nearly impossible to imagine a finer body of men or in better condition. They were well armed, well clothed and appointed in every respect, and as far as it was possible to judge from so transitory a view seemed well disciplined. They appeared in the best spirits, and I am certain that no person could have seen them without having the best hopes of their future conduct. They moved forward at a most rapid pace without appearing distressed, and certainly preserved more regularity in their order of march than we did, but this perhaps, those even of Sir John Moore's school who have seen any service, will not be inclined to allow as any proof of good management. The whole of the British army was drawn out that evening and shown to Cuesta, who appeared a perfect old woman. The Spaniards halted at Pera Caranegas half way to Talavera that night, and

we marched through their army at that place early on the 22nd. Some skirmishing took place between our light cavalry and the French during the march, and their out-posts were driven in through Talavera upon their main body, which consisted of about 22,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, and occupied a superb position six miles from this town on the road towards Madrid at the confluence of the Tagus and Alberche, having the latter river in their front. Arrangements were made to attack them on the following morning. The British were to pass the Alberche and force them in front, whilst the Spaniards having passed the Tagus at Talavera were to recross it at Salena, and thus turn the left of their position. The allied army consisted of towards 45,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry and not less than 60 pieces of artillery. The result of an action could scarcely therefore be dubious, and as the enemy would in case of defeat have had a plain of thirty or forty miles to retreat over, his destruction by our overwhelming force in cavalry would have been nearly certain. We advanced on July 23, fully expecting an easy victory, we were, however, halted when within a mile of the Alberche, and after waiting two or three hours, were ordered to march back again to Talavera; Cuesta having discovered just at the moment of attack that he was not ready. We had, however, given Victor a fine view of our numbers and apprised him of the extent of his danger, of which he showed himself fully sensible by decamping about ten o'clock that night with the greatest secrecy and expedition. On the following morning we again advanced and of course found the birds flown.

The French had evidently intended this for a permanent camp. They had built regular huts which were covered with unthrashed wheat straw, and rendered in every respect as comfortable as possible.

The insides of most of the churches and convents at Talavera had been stripped of matting &c. for this purpose, and among other things, that never failing accompaniment to a French army, a theatre, was in a very considerable state of forwardness. The windows of most of the officers' huts were glazed, and on the whole it was by many degrees the best camp I ever saw. A French captain of Hussars who had been left on picket and fallen asleep was surprised in that state by our advanced guard, and appeared rather astonished on opening his eyes to find himself with a British picket instead of his own.

On examining the position just quitted by the enemy it was evident that, although strong, it could not have been defended with any probability of success against the great superiority of force with which we should have attacked it, and I have no doubt that if this attack had been made according to the original intention on the 23rd very few of Victor's corps would have escaped.

Our junction with General Vinegas who was near Toledo with 25,000 Spaniards, was perfectly easy, and nothing would have remained to impede the advance to Madrid of the 70,000 allies which would have been collected, except 25,000 men under Jourdan. The whole campaign would then probably have assumed a very different appearance.

Whether Cuesta's conduct proceeded from treachery, or cowardice and folly united, is, and probably will re-

main, a matter of doubt, but it is certain that a conversation at which only Sir A. Wellesley, Colonel Murray, Cuesta and his Quartermaster (O' Donaghue) were present, was repeated *verbatim* to Victor two days afterwards and the spot where it took place mentioned by him. Had indeed Cuesta been the most determined enemy of his country he could not have acted in a manner more conducive to her ruin. His whole conduct showed the greatest aversion to the British, and so far from affording any of that assistance in provisions or means of transport, of which before and indeed after our junction he had been so lavish in promising, he in some instances actually intercepted our supplies and appropriated them to his own use.

As soon as the retreat of Victor was known, the Spanish army advanced in pursuit and we marched back in no very good humour to our ground at Talavera. Major-General McKenzie's division, which continued to form the advanced guard, was left on the Alberche; the remainder of the army bivouacked about a mile in front of Talavera.

We now began to find ourselves badly off in the way of provisions; bread was not to be procured, cattle, however, were in greater abundance, and we were never entirely without meat. On the 26th Joseph Buonaparte joined Victor with 22,000 men under Jourdan, composed of Sebastiani's corps 9,000 strong and whatever men could be collected from the garrisons of Madrid and other places in the vicinity. They then immediately resumed the offensive and turned the tables on the valiant Spaniards, who retreated again upon Talavera with the utmost celerity and some con-

fusion, and Sir Arthur found it necessary to move forward on the 27th with the whole of the cavalry to cover their retreat across the Alberche.

Some severe skirmishing took place, and as it now appeared evident that the enemy intended to attack, the army was formed about four o'clock on the afternoon of the 27th in a position about a mile in front of the town, its left extending towards the mountains and its right touching the Spanish left, whose right reached to the Tagus.

A considerable part of the ground thus occupied was covered with olive trees. Orders were sent to Major-General Mc Kenzie's[1] division (who were posted about four miles in front in the woods near the Alberche) to fall back upon the main body. This, however, they delayed so long that they were nearly surrounded by the enemy, who passed one column across in their rear.

The forty-fifth and eighty-seventh suffered considerably, and it was with some difficulty they made good their retreat to the main body, which, in the mean time, had taken up a most able position.

A small battery of four British three pounders, and two Spanish howitzers, was thrown up in the centre.

The line extended about two miles and a half, and the allied army amounted to 45,000 infantry, of whom 27,000 were Spanish, and of 10,000 cavalry, of whom 8,000 were Spanish under the Duc d'Albuquerque.

Being on guard in the town and hearing the firing (which commenced about three o'clock in the afternoon,) with one or two officers of the staff I ascended to the

[1] He was killed on July 28 at the battle of Talavera.

top of the highest steeple, from whence we had a perfect view of the whole of the French army, about 45,000 strong, advancing with the utmost rapidity in three columns, flanked and covered by their cavalry, light infantry, and horse artillery. At the same time our army was seen moving from its encampment to take up a new position, and the light troops of both armies were skirmishing in the intermediate space. The confusion in the town exceeded anything I ever saw, and was in some instances really ridiculous. Having been invariably beaten in all general actions, the Spaniards entertained no idea of any different result, and the inhabitants set off with all possible despatch. Some few who intended remaining took great pains to leave nothing in their houses they thought the French would dislike to see, consequently a considerable number of old firelocks, swords, and pistols were thrown into the streets.

The whole of the baggage of the Spanish army having been ordered to the rear, came into the town and completely filled it. Some of the artillery and reserve ammunition cars who had *chosen* to receive the same orders, contributed all in their power to add to the confusion, and on being ordered to return, found the utmost difficulty in obeying. The streets leading direct to the army were so completely choked as to render a passage through them even on foot utterly impracticable, and on the guard to which I belonged being ordered about six o'clock in the evening to join the regiment, we were obliged to make a considerable détour through the woods to the left of the town. In doing this, we were not a little astonished to find our-

selves nearly carried away by brigades of Spanish infantry who were running in the most utter and entire state of confusion imaginable, throwing away their arms, knapsacks, and accoutrements of every kind and description, and actually screaming with terror, and their officers, both generals and subalterns, were setting them the example. We concluded that the business was over, the armies completely beaten, and expected every instant to see the French cavalry make its appearance. On advancing, however, we were surprised to find that both armies were formed nearly a mile in front, and that these gallant heroes (who, by-the-bye, formed the reserve) having heard the cannonade commence and seeing some few wounded men brought in, thought it was high time to be off. The enemy commenced their attack about dusk by an attempt to occupy the high ground on the left in force, and for this purpose they pushed a strong column round the left of the second brigade of the Royal German Legion, who were formed in front of the high ground. This brigade being panic-struck broke and ran away in complete confusion, the French pushed on and marched to the top of the hill. Sir Arthur, who was close to the spot, instantly attacked them with General Hill's brigade, and after a most severe struggle in which bayonets, butt-ends of muskets, and even fists were brought into use, they were driven back with immense loss.

The twenty-ninth behaved with their accustomed gallantry, and in fact completely turned the scale at a moment when it was extremely doubtful.[1] Had the French

[1] *Vide* Napier, vol. ii. p. 393.

succeeded in retaining possession of this height the consequences would probably have been fatal, the position taken up would have been no longer tenable, and the difficulty of retreat extremely great. An unfortunate accident occurred at this time, the line being under arms, and not able to see many yards in front owing to the dusk, the attack on the left occasioned a volley down the whole extent, and several officers who were advanced some distance in front, were hit. Colonel Ross, and Captain Bryan were victims to this want of steadiness in the Coldstream. The former was killed on the spot, the latter mortally wounded, and died after languishing about six weeks.

The remainder of the night was passed under arms, and one or two unsuccessful attempts were again made by the enemy to occupy the heights on the left. Soon after daybreak the French commenced the attack by opening a tremendously heavy cannonade from about sixty pieces of artillery, and as they had rather the advantage over some part of our position in point of height, some of our troops (particularly the Germans) suffered very considerably.

Our artillery, though extremely well served, being of a lighter calibre (heavy six-pounders being the largest, whilst those of the enemy were nines and twelves), were unable to dismount them or counteract their fire, with much effect. During this time they made a very decided effort to turn our left, and pushed on several columns in that direction. General Hill's division, however, after a severe contest, in which they were assisted very materially by two Spanish battalions who were ordered round for this purpose under Major-

General Bassecourt, succeeded in repulsing the enemy, and retained possession of their original position. About eleven o'clock there was a cessation of hostilities down the whole line, and it was evident that a new plan of attack was determined on. Soon after Sebastiani's corps, about 9,000 strong, advanced in close column to attempt to carry the battery established in our centre by storm; they were however driven back with dreadful carnage by the fire of the field-pieces mounted in it. They rallied and again advanced, and were again driven back; they persevered, however, and the ammunition of our guns being nearly exhausted, they were received with a volley of the seventh Fusileers, who instantly charged, supported by the remainder of Major-General Campbell's division, and completely routed them with enormous loss, leaving behind them the whole of the artillery belonging to the corps, consisting of eighteen guns, mostly nine and twelve pounders, and two howitzers, together with several tumbrils, &c. Soon after this a French battalion having advanced which the officer commanding the third regiment of Guards[1] imagined he could cut off, a general advance in échellon of battalions of Major-General Sherbrooke's division was ordered, by which means the brigade of Guards incautiously advanced to within fifty yards of a thick wood which was occupied in force by the enemy and where of course they had every advantage. A severe fire of musketry was commenced by which the loss on both sides was severe, when, finding that the troops were exposed from this advanced position to the

[1] Colonel Stopford.

flanking fire of sixteen pieces of cannon from the enemy's batteries, Major-General Sherbrooke ordered the division to retreat again to their original ground. In executing this order some confusion necessarily took place, both from the nature of the ground and the necessity of obliqueing to avoid the flanking fire of the enemy, joined to which the troops were warmly attacked, within fifty paces' distance, by the advancing line of French, who fancied the victory was already decided in their favour.

Sir Arthur, however, who had foreseen precisely what took place, the instant the division advanced had most fortunately detached the first battalion of the 48th to cover the retreat and this regiment.

* * * *

The remainder of this letter describing the battle and victory of Talavera being lost, I substitute the account given by Napier as follows :—

'The brigade of English Guards quitting the line followed up their success with inconsiderate ardour. The enemy's supporting columns and dragoons advanced, the men who had been repulsed turned again, and the French batteries pounded the front and flank of the Guards. The centre of the British line was actually broken and the fate of the day seemed to incline in favour of the French, when suddenly Colonel Donellan with the forty-eighth regiment was seen advancing through the midst of the disordered masses. At first it seemed as if this regiment must be carried away by the retiring crowds, but wheeling back by companies it let them pass through the intervals and then resuming its proud and beautiful line, marched against the right of the

pursuing columns, and plied them with such a destructive musketry and closed upon them with such a firm and regular pace that the forward movement of the French was checked. The Guards and Germans immediately rallied, and the battle was restored.'

Napier estimates our loss in the two days' fighting at 6,268 officers and men hors de combat. Of these, two generals, McKenzie and Langworth, were killed.

The writer of the preceding letters carried the colours of the Coldstream in this action, and he told me that his life was saved by his having half a loaf of bread in his pocket, in which a musket-ball buried itself. When Marshal Sebastiani was ambassador in London, and relating to me his part in the battle of Talavera, he stated that the English musketry was so deadly that in twenty minutes he had nearly 3,000 men 'hors de combat.' The troops, he said, were within thirty yards of each other, and he ascribed the fatal effects of 'brown Bess' to its being so top-heavy that the men fired very low.—EDITOR.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 3, 1809.

I am sorry to say that not a shadow of doubt can any longer remain with respect to the truth of an armistice having been signed. It is to be followed by a negotiation for peace under the mediation of Russia, which is expected as to terms to be advantageous to Austria. Thus it is that the idiots deceive themselves, not that I have any doubt that, as far as *terms* go, they

may be favourable to the Court of Vienna, but the very act of granting these terms on the part of Buonaparte after what has passed, and with the knowledge that every one has of his unforgiving temper where he has the power to inflict his vengeance, is the best and strongest proof of the difficulties in which Buonaparte was involved, and of the chance which Austria had by perseverance of ultimate success. The slaughter is said to have been immense on both sides in the last battles.[1] The road from Vienna to Passau is covered with wounded French. There were twenty-seven French generals wounded. Vignolles, Boudet, and Wrede are dead of their wounds. General Kienmayer had re-entered Dresden.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, August 5, 1809.

The more I learn of the late accounts from Spain, the better I like them, not that I can be sanguine as to the ultimate result since Austria has chosen to negotiate. I think we have an opportunity of knocking on the head most of the French who are now in Spain, as we have intercepted letters from all their generals to King Joseph written in the most doleful strain, those of Victor particularly so. He begs Joseph to take him by the hand, and to make his case good with his brother, or his reputation is lost for ever. Never, he says, was a general in such a situation, his army is in want of everything and his men are reluctantly brought to undertake anything. The same from

[1] Battles of Abensberg, Eckmuhl and Ratisbonne, followed by the capture of Vienna, and the French victories of Essling and Wagram.

Soult, with a request that Buonaparte would place elsewhere some of his general officers, of whose fidelity he is more than doubtful. Victor's letters were found on a Spanish officer who had deserted to the French, and who was taken and *hanged by the peasants.*

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 1, 1809.

A city friend of mine called on me this morning to inform me that he had received a letter from St. Petersburg of so late a date as the 6th, in which his correspondent (whom I know, and who is a Russian merchant) tells him that the orders given by Buonaparte to the Polish army on their entering Galicia had created a very strong sensation at St. Petersburg, and that he should not be surprised if overtures were made by Russia to his country before Christmas; he desires my friend at all events to sell the Russian produce he has consigned to him immediately.

There are Dutch papers in town, with Paris news to the 18th. These say that Buonaparte is gone to Roab, to conclude it is supposed the negotiation for peace, which is said to be far advanced.

These letters from Vienna are not later than ours from Olmutz.

MR. C. ELLIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Claremount, Tuesday, September 19, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I found your letter on my return from town to-day. I made as faithful a report as I could to Canning of your opinions and

advice, but things had gone so far as not to leave him the option of acting upon them. His colleagues are, I understand, taking measures to form an administration independent of him, and have sought recruits, as I have been told, not only from the Doctor's[1] shop but from the Grenvilles.

MR. BAGOT TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, September 20, 1809.

My dear Lord,—Ross having undertaken to go down to Hinckley, I have promised him that I will write a line to you to acquaint you with the circumstances of the meeting which took place between Lord Castlereagh and Canning this morning, and which you may perhaps hear inaccurately from other quarters. Canning yesterday received a letter from Lord Castlereagh containing a statement of ill usage which he imagined himself to have received from Canning, and demanding satisfaction for it. This letter, though founded entirely on misinformation and therefore most easy to be explained, was couched in such intolerable terms as to preclude all explanation whatever. A meeting this morning was the consequence, and Lord C. attended by Lord Yarmouth and Canning by Charles Ellis repaired at six o'clock to Wimbledon Common. The first shots were exchanged without effect. In the second exchange Castlereagh's ball entered Canning's left thigh, and passed through the fleshy part of the top, on the outside of the bone.

He was immediately brought in C. Ellis's chaise to Brompton, where he now is, and *doing perfectly well.* He is on his couch and as yet no fever has arisen.

[1] The nickname for Lord Sidmouth.

MR. C. ELLIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, September 22, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I was about to write to you yesterday when I found that Charles Bagot had already written all that I could have told you. I have very great pleasure in now confirming his favourable report. Canning passed a very good night, and Home this morning assured me the wound is going on as well as possible. When you become acquainted with the whole of this transaction, you will (I venture confidently to anticipate) concur in thinking that Canning's conduct has throughout been perfectly proper. Castlereagh's challenge was such as to leave Canning no option.

This opinion, which is without an exception, is to me a very great satisfaction. It is at the present out of my power to enter further into the transaction, or indeed to add more.

MR. STURGES BOURNE[1] TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Holywell, September 25, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—Though you tell me you are to be found at Broadlands, I know better, and shall accordingly direct to you at Paulton's.[2] I should never be disposed to doubt the authenticity of your information, but I confess the report you make appears to me quite incredible, at least if Palmerston supposes

[1] When Mr. Canning became Prime Minister in 1828, he made Mr. Sturges Bourne Home Secretary.

[2] Mr. Sloane Stanley's seat in Hampshire.

that by sending to Lord Grenville he is doing less than surrendering at discretion, he has a very different view of his own situation and Lord G——'s disposition and understanding than I have taken. The more, however, I think of the task of forming an Administration, the greater appear the difficulties he has to encounter ; and even in his own department, if the report of Huskisson retiring be well founded, I cannot conceive how he will go on.

In the meantime, of course, I hear nothing from those who know anything, except a very good account of Canning, who, considering the situation of his wound, seems very fortunate. This rencontre being at present uppermost in my thoughts, I cannot help sometimes thinking that it might not be unnatural or useless for the King to express a pretty strong opinion on the conduct of one of his servants challenging another for an opinion which he might think it a duty to His Majesty as well as to himself to give, however prejudicial it may be to the party thinking himself aggrieved, especially when, as in this case, there has been no personal dispute or altercation.

Indeed, such a practice appears to me new, and to touch the Constitution considerably. But perhaps I have thought on the subject till I am in a dream. But what is to be the result I can as little conjecture as when we are again to have a dry day.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, September 25, 1809.

I can do little more than acknowledge your Lordship's letter, for I have not a moment to myself, nor have I had one since last Thursday.

However, I may lament, and I do lament most sincerely, all that has passed. I feel confident that when your Lordship is acquainted with the circumstances which led to it, you will be convinced that Mr. Canning had no option but to act as he did. I am glad to say his wound is getting on very well, and that he continues free from fever.

MR. C. ELLIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, September 26, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—The one line that you desire with respect to Canning will, I am happy to say, be exactly as you would wish, that his wound goes on perfectly well.

As to measures, I cannot reply as much to your satisfaction, they must continue at a stand till Lord Grenville and Lord Grey send or bring their answers.

I have not much confidence in Hawkesbury, even with Perceval's help, making a better negotiation of this than he did with Otto. I believe he will in this case be not less disposed to waive almost every point to Lord Grey or Lord Grenville than the only one which is necessary to Canning. In the meantime I send you a copy of Lord Castlereagh's challenge and

of Canning's answer, and of a letter from Canning to the Duke of Portland, which fully exculpates Canning as to the concealment, and shows that he has been fighting the poor old Duke's duel, or Lord Camden's, or Hawkesbury's or almost anybody's but his own.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, September 26, 1809.

Mr. C. Ellis's letter of to-day and its inclosures make it unnecessary for me to say anything relative to Mr. Canning. In truth he has been the victim of the misconduct of others. I have Mr. Canning's permission that the letters should be shown to Lord Fitzharris. There is not time for making another copy. May I, therefore, beg of your Lordship to communicate your copy to his Lordship. I knew not a word relative to the new arrangements. I conclude Lord Granville Leveson Gower will resign. Mr. Huskisson did so the moment he heard of that of Mr. Canning, who I take it for granted will resign the seals to some one whom His Majesty may order to receive them to-morrow.

Lord Grenville is not yet come to town.

The following are copies of the letters which preceded the late meeting between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning.

LORD CASTLEREAGH TO MR. CANNING.

St. James' Square, September 17, 1809.

Sir,—It is unnecessary for me to enter into any detailed statement of the circumstances which preceded the

recent resignations. It is enough for me, with a view to the immediate object of this letter, to state, that it appears a proposition had been agitated without any communication with me for my removal from the War Department, and that you towards the close of the session having re-urged a decision upon this question with the alternative of your seceding from the Government, procured a positive promise from the Duke of Portland (the execution of which you afterwards considered yourself entitled to enforce) that such removal should be carried into effect. Notwithstanding this promise, by which I consider that you pronounced it unfit that I should remain charged with the conduct of the war, and by which my situation as a Minister of the Crown was made dependent upon your will and pleasure, you continued to sit in the same cabinet with me and to leave me not only in the persuasion that I possessed your confidence and support as a colleague, but you allowed me, though thus virtually superseded, in breach of every principle of good faith, both public and private, to originate and proceed in the execution of a new enterprise of the most arduous and important nature with your apparent concurrence and ostensible approbation. You were fully aware that if my situation in the Government had been disclosed to me, I could not have submitted to remain one moment in office without the entire abandonment of my private honour and public duty.

You knew I was deceived and you continued to deceive me. I am aware it may be said, which I am ready to acknowledge, that when you pressed for decision for my removal you also pressed for its dis-

closure, and that it was resisted by the Duke of Portland and some members of the Government supposed to be my friends, but I never can admit that you have a right to make use of such a plea in justification of an act affecting my honour, or that the sentiments of others should justify an acquiescence in such a delusion on your part, who had yourself felt and stated its unfairness. Nor can I admit that the head of any administration or any supposed private friend (whatever may be their motives), can authorise or sanction any man in such a course of long and persevering deception; for were I to admit such a principle my honour and character would be from that moment at the discretion of persons wholly unauthorised, and known to you to be unauthorised, to act for me in such a case. It was therefore your act and your conduct which deceived me, and it is impossible for me to acquiesce in being placed in such a situation by you which no man of honour could knowingly submit to, nor patiently suffer himself to be betrayed into without forfeiting that character.

I have no right as a public man to resent your demanding upon public grounds my removal from the particular office I have held, or even from the administration, as the condition of your remaining a member of the Government, but I have a distinct right to expect that a proposition justifiable in itself shall not be executed in an unjustifiable manner, and at the expense of my honour and reputation; and I consider that you were bound at least to avail yourself of the same alternative, namely your own resignation, to take yourself out of the predicament of practising such a deceit towards

me which you did exercise in demanding a decision for my removal. Under these circumstances I must require that satisfaction from you to which I feel myself entitled to lay claim.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

CASTLEREAGH.

MR. CANNING TO LORD CASTLEREAGH.

Gloucester Lodge, September 20, 1809.

My Lord,—The tone and the purport of your Lordship's letter (which I have this moment received), of course precludes any other answer on my part to the misapprehensions and misrepresentations with which it abounds than that I will cheerfully give to your Lordship the satisfaction which you require.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

GEORGE CANNING.

The following is a statement of the course of that transaction, upon a misapprehension of the leading facts of which Lord Castlereagh's letter appears to have been founded.

It is perfectly true that so long ago as Easter Mr. Canning had represented to the Duke of Portland the insufficiency (in his opinion) of the Government as then constituted, to carry on the affairs of the country under all the difficulties of the times, and had requested that unless some change should be effected in it, he might be permitted to resign his office. It is equally true that

in the course of the discussions which arose out of this representation, it was proposed to Mr. Canning and accepted by him as the condition of his consenting to retain the seals of the Foreign Office, that a change should be made in the War Department. But it is not true that the time at which that change was ultimately proposed to be made was of Mr. Canning's choice, and it is not true that he was party, or consenting to the concealment of that intended change from Lord Castlereagh. With respect to the concealment, Mr. Canning, some short time previous to the date of Lord Castlereagh's letter, without the smallest suspicion of the existence of any intention on the part of Lord Castlereagh to make such an appeal to Mr. Canning as that letter contains, but upon information that some misapprehension did exist as to Mr. Canning's supposed concurrence in the reserve which had been practised towards Lord Castlereagh, transmitted to one of Lord Castlereagh's most intimate friends, to be communicated whenever he might think proper, the copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Canning to the Duke of Portland in the month of July, in which Mr. Canning requests in justice to himself, that it may be remembered whenever hereafter this concealment shall be alleged (as he doubts not it will) *against him*, as an act of injustice towards Lord Castlereagh, that it did not originate in his suggestion; that so far from desiring it he conceived, however erroneously, Lord Camden to be the sure channel of communication to Lord Castlereagh, and that up to a very late period he believed such communication to have been actually made. The copy of this letter and of the Duke of Portland's answer to it, ac-

knowledging Mr. Canning's repeated remonstrances against the concealment, are still in the possession of Lord Castlereagh's second. The communication to Lord Camden to which this letter refers, was made on April 28, with Mr. Canning's knowledge and at his particular desire, Lord Camden being the near connection and most confidential friend of Lord Castlereagh. It never occurred to Mr. Canning, nor was it credible to him, till he received the most positive asseverations of the fact, that Lord Camden had kept back such a communication from Lord Castlereagh. With respect to the period at which the change in the War Department was to take place, Mr. Canning was induced in the first instance to consent to its postponement till the rising of Parliament, partly by the representations made to him of the inconveniences of any change in the middle of a session, but principally from the consideration of the particular circumstances under which Lord Castlereagh stood in the House of Commons after Easter; circumstances which would have given to his removal, at that period of the session, a character which it was certainly no part of Mr. Canning's wish that it should bear. Mr. Canning, however, received the most positive promise that a change in the War Department should take place immediately upon the close of the session. When that time arrived, the earnest and repeated entreaties of most of Lord Castlereagh's friends in the cabinet, were employed to prevail on Mr. Canning to consent to the postponement of the arrangement; at length and most reluctantly he did give his consent to its being postponed to the period proposed by Lord Castlereagh's friends: viz., the termination of

the expedition. But he did so upon the most distinct and solemn assurances that whatever might be the issue of the expedition, the change should take place at that period, that the seals of the War Department should then be offered to Lord Wellesley (the person for whose accession to the cabinet Mr. Canning was known to be most anxious), and that the interval should be diligently employed by Lord Castlereagh's friends in preparing Lord Castlereagh to acquiesce in that arrangement. It was therefore matter of astonishment to Mr. Canning, when at the issue of the expedition he reminded the Duke of Portland that the time was now come for His Grace's writing to Lord Wellesley, to find that, so far from the interval having been employed by Lord Castlereagh's friends in preparing Lord Castlereagh for the change, the same reserve had been continued towards him against which Mr. Canning had before so earnestly remonstrated. Being informed of this circumstance by the Duke of Portland, and learning at the same time from His Grace that there were other difficulties attending the promised arrangement, of which Mr. Canning had not before been apprised, and that the Duke of Portland had himself come to a determination to retire from office, Mr. Canning instantly, and before any steps whatever had been taken towards carrying the promised arrangement into effect, withdrew his claim for its execution and requested the Duke of Portland to tender his (Mr. Canning's) resignation to the King. This was on Wednesday, September 18, previously to the levée of that day. All question of the performance of the promise made to Mr. Canning being thus at an end the reserve which Lord Castle-

reagh's friends had hitherto so perseveringly practised towards Lord Castlereagh appears to have been laid aside. Lord Castlereagh was now made acquainted with the nature of the arrangement which had been intended to have been proposed to him. What may have been the reasons which prevented Lord Castlereagh's friends from fulfilling the assurances given to Mr. Canning that Lord Castlereagh's mind should be prepared by their communications for the arrangement intended to be carried into effect, and what the motives for the disclosure to Lord Castlereagh after that arrangement had ceased to be in contemplation, it is not for Mr. Canning to explain.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, September 28, 1809.

Mr. Ellis has been kind enough to show me your Lordship's letter to him of yesterday. I was quite sure that after your Lordship had read Lord Castlereagh's letter, you would be convinced that Mr. Canning had no option but to act as he did, and I feel equally persuaded that when you have read the *statement* which I am authorised to promise you by to-morrow's post, you will be equally convinced that Mr. Canning has been more sinned against than sinning, and finally that he has been the victim of the want of decision in some, and of the duplicity and little dirty double dealing of others. In short that a measure taken up by Mr. Canning on public grounds, and on public grounds alone, has by the hands into which it fell been converted into *une intrigue d'anti-chambre.*

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 2, 1809.

I have read and re-read your Lordship's letter with great satisfaction. I was anxious to have your opinion with respect to 'the statement.' It is not necessary for me to say that I subscribe to every word of what your Lordship says; I must ever think that whatever were the motives of those who counselled, and those who practised the concealment, their conduct in doing so has been most unjust towards Mr. Canning. This concealment however was but a personal injustice towards him; the after game they played to induce the Duke of Portland to resign at this precise moment, for no other purpose than that of covering the retreat of Lord Castlereagh has had a worse and far more dangerous effect, it has loosened every part of the machine of government, and how it will go on in its present cranky state I cannot foresee. I do not understand that Lord Grenville had any personal communication with any of the ministers. I think Lord Grey acted disrespectfully to His Majesty in not coming up to town. Mrs. Canning came to town the day I returned from Hinckley. She decided to do so the moment she learned from me what had happened. Mr. Canning's wound begins to heal; he was wheeled in his garden yesterday. We understand that the new arrangement is made. Mr. Perceval First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Bathurst to succeed Mr. Canning, and Mr. Robert Dundas Lord Castlereagh; this is all I have heard. I suppose that they will kiss hands on Wednesday: no news from the continent.

P.S.—Mr. Canning does not wish the statement to be shown, as it would give it the air of a *formal defence* : he only wishes his friends to be in possession of the leading facts; he would have sent one to Lord Fitzharris, but I told him you were going there.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 3, 1809.

Mr. Canning has written to Mr. Perceval to learn the King's pleasure with respect to the delivering up the seals of the Foreign Department. If his successor is named (and I have not heard the report of yesterday relative to Lord Bathurst's accepting them contradicted), Mr. Canning means to wait on His Majesty at the levee to-morrow. I confess I was startled when I learnt this intention this morning, but Home says there is not the least risk in Mr. Canning's going to the Queen's House.

P.S.—I regret as deeply as does your Lordship all that has happened, for I see much cause to dread great and general mischief resulting from it; mischief in which we may all be involved.

If Mr. Perceval had not played off a lawyer's trick, and the dear Duke of Portland not given way to the former's suggestion, much, if not all, of this might have been avoided.

MR. STURGES BOURNE TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Holywell, October 5, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I have not thanked you for your last communication, because I was willing to

take the chance of receiving some account that might be worth forwarding. But having heard from Canning with reference to what is past rather than present, as it respects Lord Castlereagh, I despair of knowing more than the newspapers communicate. You have, I hope, received from Canning a statement of his conduct with respect to Lord Castlereagh, which I am happy to find must put our friend right on that transaction in the opinion of all mankind.[1] Indeed Lord Castlereagh appears to have preferred the charge of concealment against the only person who tried to prevent it. Somewhat Irish this!

The only merit of the new Administration, as far as appears hitherto, is that it has an avowed, and I hope real head. It will no longer be a government of departments from which, speaking with Treasury feelings, I can assure you the country has suffered great evil in matters of finance. They are fortunate also in having persuaded Lord Harrowby to take the seals of the Foreign Office once more. Beyond this it is difficult to boast of their strength.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Talavera Real, October 5, 1809.

At length I am enabled to put pen to paper to thank you for yours of July 9 and August 17, and which you

[1] A long printed statement, by which it appears to me that the wish expressed by Mr. Canning, that Lord Castlereagh should be removed from the War Department and some other post, was shared by the Cabinet, but that each member was afraid of openly stating it; and the Duke of Portland himself delayed the information to Lord C. so long that he discovered it, and considered it an intrigue of Canning alone. He was evidently not more to be blamed than his colleagues.—Ed.

must think I have been most dilatory in doing; but the fact is, that for these last two months I have been actually too ill to write. The violent heat of the sun in the day and the cold and dampness of the nights reduced me so much that, for nearly a month, I was unable to get off my bed.

The proceedings of this army for these two months past have not been such as to excite much interest. We have been almost in a state of complete inactivity, and so for some little time we seem likely to remain.

I am sorry to say we are dreadfully sickly. I believe at this moment our hospitals contain upwards of 10,000 men, which is a most alarming proportion; and this number is increasing every day, particularly in our division which is not yet cantoned, though all the rest of the army have been for nearly a month. We are all most heartily sick of this country and its inhabitants. I don't believe we shall do much good by remaining in it, and we have seen enough of the Spanish army to pray most sincerely that we may never act with them again. The Portuguese army, under his *Excellency Marshal Beresford*, is, I believe, completely disorganised, and he is living at Lisbon as a private gentleman; at least that is what we hear, but it may not be true to the full extent. We hear no more of the French than if no such people existed. I imagine it will be a long time before they can venture to send a force from Madrid of sufficient magnitude to undertake operations against us. Their conduct to our wounded, both officers and men, has been most handsome, and in fact exceeds any thing I ever heard of. Their courage in

action, and their generous behaviour to those whom the fortune of war has thrown into their power, oblige one to esteem them; whilst, on the other hand, the cowardice of the Spaniards when engaged, and their excessive cruelty afterwards, make one hate and despise them to the greatest degree. I was actually obliged, several times, to send a force to save the lives of many wounded Frenchmen in our front the morning after the battle of Talavera, from whom these wretches had run away the day before, but *then* wished to murder in cold blood, and were beyond measure astonished at being prevented. I do not wonder you thought my account of the action a shabby one; it certainly was completely so; but I had not time to write a longer, and I thought you would have a detailed account in Lord Wellington's dispatch, which, by the bye, we all agree was a most miserable production, and made less of the business than it really deserved; besides which, some parts are not correct. We are all, as you may imagine, much flattered at the way in which it is spoken of in England; but I must set you right in one particular: you seem to think that though our brigade might show courage, it did not show discipline or steadiness, charging in the way we did. Now, though I, in my humble opinion, believe the charge was a most imprudent one, and totally inexcusable, still our business was to obey orders, and the fault rests with those who gave them, not with us. When we discovered that we were in a *scrape*, we were ordered to retreat to our former position; in doing which we halted, faced about, and fired three times by word of command as if at a review, which was not a sign of a want of steadiness.

This place, which I doubt whether you will find in the maps, is about three leagues from Badajoz and five from Elvas.[1]

LORD BATHURST TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Wimbledon, Sunday Evening, October 8, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—Upon my returning from London yesterday, I found a letter from you to Lady Bathurst, who is gone to Newnham, and from thence to Cirencester for a few days. I am too polite a husband to open letters addressed to her, but I very much wished to do so in this instance, as I am desirous of knowing how to direct to you. It is simply to let you know by letter what you will soon see in the newspapers, that Lord Wellesley has the offer of the Foreign Department; that, as his answer cannot arrive yet, and he himself must take some little time longer, it has been thought advisable to trust me with the Seals in the interim. From what I have heard, I do not expect a refusal; and I am almost certain that my labours in that office will be of short duration; but while I am in that situation you will, I hope, allow me to have the benefit of your advice and experience. I will say nothing of what I feel in accepting this situation. You may judge of what I feel concerning it, when I say that the terms on which I hold it, which to many would be an objection, is that which alone makes it acceptable to me.

Yours very sincerely,

BATHURST.

[1] Captain George Bowles went to England on sick leave, and returned to the army in 1811.

Lord Harrowby, I believe, consents to act as President of the Board of Trade until I go back to that situation.

THE HON. F. ROBINSON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Newby Hall, October 9, 1809.

My dear Lord,—The complete breaking-up of the Government, in consequence of the transactions which have recently taken place, has left matters in such a state of uncertainty and instability, that I have declined a proposal made to me by Perceval, either to remain at my former post, or to accept a seat at one of the Boards. The offer was certainly handsome, and, under more auspicious circumstances, would have been tempting; but I confess I felt little disposition to embark officially with a Government which had, by its own injudicious conduct and want of confidence amongst its members, contrived to get rid of two of the most useful amongst them without gaining any accession of strength from any other quarter. Whether the latter circumstance was their fault or not, I am not sufficiently informed to say, but I own I cannot well explain the grounds upon which Lords Grey and Grenville took upon themselves peremptorily to refuse all communication and explanation in regard to the proposal tendered for their consideration.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, October 9, 1809.

We at last received some accounts from Prague. The letter of September 2 is warlike; it mentions Count

Stadion's having left that city to return to the Imperial headquarters, and to take upon himself the portfeuille of Foreign Affairs. The Austrian armies are everywhere concentrating, and their military preparations going on: still, however, the great question is left undecided. The Archduke Charles has no longer the popular cry in his favour. The Emperor is considered as the 'firmest' man in his dominions. The accounts from Heligoland about Prussia are, that she is drawing her troops together, and has issued orders for the purchase of horses for the artillery, cavalry, and field equipage. Russia is evidently out of humour with France. The conduct of the latter in Gallicia has had this effect. I must remark, however, that when the Prague letter was written they were in high expectation of the result of our expedition to the Scheldt. This, and what has subsequently happened, must do much mischief abroad. We have no certainty at this moment of our successor. The new Ministry are striving hard to gain Lord Wellesley. They have sent over to him to Lisbon a Mr. Sydenham, who was his treasurer in India.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 10, 1809.

I have but a moment before I set off for Gloucester Lodge to say, that we have accounts from Bathurst from Buda of September 20. The terms proposed by Buonaparte to Austria were that, in consideration of *his* agreeing to relinquish the *uti possidetis* (in which he was placed by the armistice) as the basis of a treaty of peace, Austria should cede the circles of Bohemia on

the Saxon frontier; that of Bavaria to extend to the Ens and the Save; and, with respect to Gallicia, that province must depend on the arrangement made between Austria, Russia, and the Poles. The Littorale to be ceded by Austria to France. These terms the Emperor would not listen to. His Imperial Majesty has sent in his ultimatum (which we do not know), and in the meantime every military preparation for renewing the war has been made. Prince Leichtenstein has the chief command under the Emperor.

The main army consists of 160,000 regulars and 40,000 militia. The Bohemian army, 20,000 regulars and 40,000 militia and some detached corps, making a total of 300,000 men. Buonaparte has received considerable reinforcements; his army amounts to 170,000 men, besides the corps employed against the Tyrolese, who have Dutch, and French, and Bavarian corps.

. . . . . .

Lord Bathurst succeeds to the Foreign Office. His Lordship announced it yesterday to Hammond.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office, October 11, 1809.

I have no other motive for writing to your Lordship to-day than that of closing by this letter my official correspondence. I need not repeat that I am always at your Lordship's command, whenever you may please to employ me, and I am quite sure that in or out of office I shall still be honoured with your notice.

Mr. Canning is just returned from resigning the Seals. I probably may hear something at dinner to-day of his interview with His Majesty.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Foreign Office,[1] October 13, 1809.

It is true that M. de Bubna set off for Buonaparte's headquarters on the 21st ult., but, so far from carrying an *ultimatum*, he was only the bearer of the refusal of the Emperor to the propositions made to him, with the various *motives* on which that refusal was founded; but without any specific counter-propositions, and without any term being fixed for bringing the negotiations to a point. All this is weak, but what follows is worse. The wished-for peace is universal; it is generally and strongly pronounced by the *army*. The commander-in-chief and the military council are decidedly for it, as well as the most distinguished of the Austrian generals. Some of the latter assert its *necessity* loudly, others in a more indirect manner; some desire it on any terms, others with modifications. The Emperor *alone* is the only person who wishes to continue the war. Count Stadion (the writer observes) preserves *une sage milieu* between the sentiments of His Imperial master and those of his generals; but our informant adds, if Buonaparte should *relax* at all in his demands peace is certain, since its advocates would by this circumstance become irresistible. The writer doubts whether Buonaparte would continue to insist upon Austria shutting her ports to our flag; he has never yet brought forward such a proposition; on the contrary, he does not seem to insist strongly upon the cession of

[1] Mr. Ross remained a few days at the Foreign Office to arrange Mr. Canning's papers, and make up arrears.

Trieste. Fuisne he does not ask for, since he told M. de Bubna, in one of their late interviews, that the English could supply Austria with all the colonial produce she wanted by the latter port. This is the foundation of his opinion on the subject of our not being again shut out from the Austrian ports. Buonaparte also added: I cannot give you back the Tyrol, but it may be some satisfaction to you to know, that *Bavaria cannot have it.* M. de Bubna's return was looked for in four or five days. The letter ends by saying that it may yet be *some weeks* before anything is definitely settled, but that it is ten to one in favour of peace.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Broadlands, October 15, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I have just received the enclosed letter[1] from Perceval, and am in consequence setting off for London, where I shall be early to-morrow morning.

We have been spending three days very pleasantly on a sailing party, from which we returned last night. Our weather has been remarkably fine for our purpose, with plenty of wind and sunshine; and although the latter was not quite so strong as the former, it made everything look very bright and cheerful, and by dint of boat cloaks one can always keep out the cold.

[1] This letter, having been returned to Lord P., is not extant, but the next one explains its purport.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Admiralty, October 16, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I got to town this morning and went to Perceval's, and was, as you may easily imagine, infinitely surprised at the proposals he had to make to me. He stated that, having been deprived of the assistance of Huskisson and Sturges Bourne, he felt much in need of some one to take off his shoulders part of the labour of his offices in and out of the House; that he meant for that purpose to divide the situations of Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury, and proposed to me to take the former. He said he had previously offered it to Vansittart, who declined taking it unless Lord Sidmouth formed part of the Administration, and they had decided that it was not expedient to take him in. Annexed to this office he offered a seat in the Cabinet, if I chose it; and he thought it better I should have it. I of course expressed to him how much honoured I felt by this very flattering proof of the good opinion he was pleased to entertain of me, but also my great fears that I should find myself wholly incompetent for the situation, both from my inexperience in the details of matters of finance, and my want of practice in public speaking. To this he replied, that he should of course take the principal share of the Treasury business both in and out of the House; that, in the office, Harrison and his own Secretary would be able to afford me great assistance; and that, in the House, practice would soon enable me to get on well enough for the purposes of

business. He said that he felt great difficulty in finding anyone to take the situation, and that he did not at the moment know of anyone else to whom he could offer it. He named Milnes, member for Pomfret, the man who made so great a figure as a speaker, as the only other person he had thought of. Upon further conversation he appeared to think it possible that I might come in at first as a Lord of the Treasury; and afterwards if, upon fagging at the business between this and the meeting of Parliament, I found it likely I could take the Chancellorship, I would be promoted to it. The inconvenience, however, of this arrangement would be, that if I declined it ultimately he might not be able to find anyone else in the short interval which would possibly elapse, and that then I should not be of so much use to him in the House as not carrying so much weight as if I held the Chancellorship. Thirdly, he suggested that it was possible that, if I felt objections to either of these proposals, the office of Secretary at War might be to be disposed of if I chose to take that. I own I feel the most extreme embarrassment to know what answers to give. Of course one's vanity and ambition would lead to accept the brilliant offer first proposed; but it is throwing for a *great stake*, and where much is to be gained *very much* also may be lost. I have always thought it unfortunate for anyone, and particularly a young man, to be put above his proper level, as he only rises to fall the lower. Now, I am quite without knowledge of finance, and never but once spoke in the House. The approaching Session will be one of infinite difficulty. Perceval says, that the state of the finances of this country as calculated to

carry on the war is very embarrassing, and from what has lately happened in public affairs, from the number of speakers in opposition, and the few debaters on our side of the question, the warfare of the House of Commons will certainly be for us very severe. I do not know upon which of the two points I should feel most alarmed. By fagging and assistance I might get on in the office, but fear that I never should be able to act my part properly in the House. A good deal of debating must of course devolve upon the person holding the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; all persons, not born with the talents of a Pitt or Fox, must make many bad speeches at first, if they speak a great deal upon many subjects, as they cannot be masters of all; and bad speeches, though tolerated in any person not in a responsible situation, would make a Chancellor of the Exchequer exceedingly ridiculous, particularly if his friends could not set off against his bad oratory a great knowledge and capacity for business; and I should be apprehensive that, instead of materially assisting Perceval, I should only bring disgrace or ridicule upon him and myself. The second proposal, of coming in first as simply a Lord of the Treasury, at first sight is liable to fewer objections of the above sort. I might, to a certain degree, qualify myself for the other office in the interval between this and the meeting of Parliament; but still the same objections hold good as to the Parliamentary part, if I ultimately take the other; and it would not be fair to Perceval and the Government to come in in that way, unless with a pretty determined view of taking the Chancellorship, as it might be difficult, if not impossible, when near the opening of the Session,

for Perceval to make the division of his offices which he wishes.

There are now two seats in the Treasury vacant, and of course one must be filled by the Chancellor of the Exchequer whoever he may be; it would, therefore, be impossible probably to keep one vacant for any great length of time, so that I think I am in a great degree called upon to make my determination as to the office now; and thus the second proposal, I think, reduces itself to a choice between taking the office now, or being raised to it gradually by a previous seat at the Treasury Board; and, if I were to take it, I think the general effect of the latter mode would be better. I should myself strongly incline to the latter offer of being Secretary at War. From what one has heard of the office, it seems one better suited to a beginner, and in which I might hope not to fail; or in which one should not be so prominent if one did not at first do as well as one should. Perceval said, however, that he must see me again before he could positively say that this was at his disposal. He has given me till Wednesday to consider. He at first proposed to have my answer to-morrow; but I begged to have till the next day, as I thought by that time I could have your sentiments upon the subject. I think the choice lies between being Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary at War; since the latter I should certainly prefer to being a Lord of the Treasury simply, another being the Chancellor, and Perceval First Lord. Perceval did not mention whether the seat in the Cabinet would go with the War Office; but that, though a great honour, and certainly an assistance in debate, should not, I think,

alone determine my choice. One consideration not to be wholly overlooked is, that we may probably not remain in long enough to retrieve one's blunders made at the outset; and the ground of the War Office is, I think, *quite* high enough for me to leave off upon.

Our party is certainly ill off for second rates, but if Perceval cannot find another as good as me for the Exchequer, it is clear, I think, that we are too weak to stand. Milnes would probably not take it unless his ambition got the better of his partiality for Canning and his aversion to Perceval; and, though a man of very brilliant talents, I should much doubt his steadiness; but there must be many well-fitted for the office. I send you a duplicate of this letter to Broadlands, in case it should by any accident miscarry, as the time for deliberation is so short that I cannot wait for another post day.

Yours most affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD PALMERSTON.

New Hall, October 17, 1809.

My dear Harry,—I had just answered your letter of the 15th, and put my answer into the post, when your servant, who had sought for me in vain at Heron Court, brought me the one written yesterday, explanatory of the reason which induced Perceval to send for you in such haste. As you wish to have my answer by to-morrow morning, I have little time (it is now half-past four) to bestow on framing it; but although the subject is a very important and serious one, yet it strikes me

so manifestly what is best for you to do, that I think I can venture to give an immediate opinion without any great apprehension that I should deviate from it on more mature consideration. Nothing can be more flattering to you, nor of course more pleasing to me, than Perceval's offer to you.

In different times, and under less perplexing circumstances, I should not demur as to the propriety of your accepting the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; for, although it is a post which requires great labour and knowledge of finance, yet you would easily get habituated to the first, and soon acquire the latter. By what I say of the times, I do not refer to the probable short duration of this Government. That consideration would be a narrow and selfish motive for refusing to become a member of it; but I mean the peculiarly unsettled state of the country, and the dangers which menace it from abroad; and I cannot wish you to be placed at once *in the breach* to experience all the buffetings to which this would expose you, without the adequate means of resisting and counteracting them.

I am, therefore, decidedly of opinion, that you would not act fairly either by Perceval, by the public, or by yourself, were you to undertake the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, either in the first instance, or after the sort of preparatory seminary in which he proposes to place you; since, by doing this, you would virtually pledge yourself to accept the other; and if, at the expiration of the time, you were to decline it, you would increase the difficulties you are desirous to alleviate. Without hesitation I advise you to decline the greater office; and I do it more confidently, since every reason

I could possibly urge, you have anticipated in your very judicious and most rational remarks.

But, on the other hand, I am strongly inclined to recommend to you to take the Secretaryship of War (with the Cabinet). It is a very respectable situation, which, without bringing you too forward *at once*, will, if you hold it a short time, infallibly lead you to the higher posts in the Cabinet; and one from which, if you are dismissed, you will not fall from a perilous height, or quit with any discredit. I have not time to add a word more. I can have no objection, if it be of any use to you, for you to tell Perceval my opinion. I wish his Government to be strong and lasting from the bottom of my heart.

Ever, my dear Harry, most truly and affectionately yours,

MALMESBURY.

RIGHT HON. GEORGE ROSE TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Old Palace Yard, October 17, 1809.

My dear Lord,—It would really be difficult for me to express, if I had more time for reflection and writing, what I felt this morning on reading, in a letter from my son, the substance of a conversation he had with you two days ago. The most anxious wish of my heart as to political matters, after the death of our lamented friend the Duke of Portland, was, that I might, for the remainder of my life, continue to act with those who were cordially attached to him. To Mr. Canning I gave *most unequivocal proofs of that*; and the strong inclination of my mind was towards

retiring with him when I came to town in the middle of last month; but, on the fuller and more mature deliberation *of all circumstances*, I really find it quite impossible. I would have retired if I could have thought myself justified in doing so. I seriously wished to have taken that line and to support; but the strong persuasion of what Mr. Pitt would have wished me to do, if he had been living, and in a state not to have mixed in public matters, decided my conduct. I shall be very anxious for a personal communication with your Lordship when I am within reach of you. It is some relief to me to say this much: Mr. Pitt loved you, my Lord; and I derive consolation from still thinking and acting with those who feel as you do.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Admiralty, October 18, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I have many thanks to give you for your very kind letter, which afforded me great satisfaction by confirming the opinion which I had at first entertained of Perceval's very flattering proposal, and which had been strengthened by all the reflection I had been able to bestow upon the subject during the time that has elapsed since I wrote to you. I am just returned from Perceval, to whom I stated the result of my deliberation; and that, fully sensible of the honour he did me in offering me the Exchequer, I thought it most prudent to decline it; but should, however, feel much gratified by the appointment of Secretary at War, if it should be at his disposal. He then told me very frankly that, as he had mentioned in our

former interview, it depended upon certain other arrangements whether he should be able to give me that office: that, conceiving that Milnes would be a very great acquisition to Government if the bias he had in favour of Canning did not prevent him from joining us, he had written to him to say that he had to offer him such an official situation as (if inclined to take any) he would probably be disposed to accept: that, should Milnes come up in consequence, he meant to offer him the Chancellorship of the Exchequer; but that it was possible Milnes might decline so ostensible a post, and that then, rather than run the risk of losing his support, he wished to offer him the War Office, which, in case he declined the other, he possibly might accept: that, in such a case, he would only have it in his power to offer me a seat at the Treasury, which he still hoped I would take, as it would let me more into the business, and, if we stood our ground, pave the way to some further advance.

He said he felt that this preference of Milnes might appear not very flattering to me; but he trusted I should view it in its right light, as proceeding from his great anxiety to secure a doubtful friend, who might be of essential service to our cause. I assured him that my principal wish was that his Government should receive every possible accession of strength, and that no personal considerations would prevent me from acquiescing in any arrangement which would conduce to that end; but that, in point of fact, the first offer he had made me of the Exchequer was so very flattering that, having declined that, I could not in any case object to his giving Milnes the preference as to the

War Office; and that, should he decide to take it, I should very willingly take a seat at the Treasury. I trust you will approve of this resolution. It may not at first sight appear worth while to move from hence to the Treasury; but, in as far as it will initiate me into Treasury business, and give me better opportunities of communicating with Perceval and others as to the matter and conduct of debates which may arise, it will be a desirable move. Perceval then told me in strict confidence (which, however, I don't consider myself as violating in mentioning it to *you*), that there was an idea of making George Rose Chancellor of the Exchequer; that the King had objected to it upon the ground of his being Clerk of the Parliament, an office he thought inconsistent with the other; that this objection, however, might perhaps be obviated; that this appointment would, however, be considered as temporary; and that, if the Administration lasted, I might still look forward to the situation. Whatever may be the result of this business, it must always be a source of great pride and gratification to me to have been thought worthy of so splendid an offer; and I am persuaded that no after-thoughts will diminish the satisfaction I feel of having been right in declining it. Milnes' answer cannot be received for some days, but I shall not fail to let you know as soon as I hear anything more upon this subject.

Ever, my dear Lord Malmesbury, yours most affectionately, PALMERSTON.

There is a hitch in Dundas's appointment to the War Department, arising from Lord Melville, who probably

wants it himself. Perceval seems, however, to think the general feeling against Lord M. too strong to render it advisable to take him in; and probably, when he finds that object unattainable, he will let his son accept what is tendered to him.

Lord Mulgrave has sent to offer my seat at this Board to Percy. I had immediately communicated Perceval's offer to Lord Mulgrave, who talked to me about it in the kindest and most handsome manner, saying that, in his opinion, the only objection to my accepting it at once arose from my own feelings upon the subject; and that, if I was not nervous about it, he advised me to take it.

LETTER FROM LORD MALMESBURY TO CANNING.

Durnford, Sunday, October 21, 1809.

My dear Canning,—Although I have not hitherto troubled you with any letter, I have not, believe me, been an unconcerned hearer of what has lately passed, respecting your affair with Lord Castlereagh, or with regard to your resignation. On the first point you are well acquainted with my sentiments through Charles Ellis. I congratulate you most sincerely on your speedy recovery from a wound so nearly proving fatal, and trust that you may never again be exposed to a similar accident. The subject of your resignation, from the first moment I became acquainted with it, was one, as you know, through the same channel, which gave me the greatest concern. I lamented then, and do lament every day still more and more, that you felt such a step expedient, with a strong bias prevalent on my mind to

concur with you on public measures, and with a special wish on this particular occasion to reconcile my opinion to your motives for resigning. I cannot bring myself to be convinced that they were sufficient to impel you, either as an individual or as a servant of the Crown, to withdraw your assistance and co-operation from the King's councils at a moment when, from what is to be feared at home, and from what is passing abroad, the country is placed in a position of extreme danger; a danger manifestly so evident, and perhaps so near, as to be a consideration paramount to all others; for it is one from which the country cannot escape or be rescued, but by the aid and exertion of abilities such as those you possess. I am sorry you should have felt fettered in the employment of those abilities; but still a sufficient range appears to have been left for you to have displayed them with the most beneficial effects, and one which would have enabled you to render such essential services to your country as would have increased their weight and power to a degree that inevitably, and possibly at no very remote period, must have placed you in a situation of most unrivalled pre-eminence. These ends, and I speak feelingly on both, the one so highly important to the State, the other so laudable and worthy an object of ambition, are, in my view of the subject, defeated by your resignation. I explain myself, my dear Canning, thus freely, because it is due to our long intimacy and friendship. It becomes also necessary to be explicit from the possibility, I trust not probability, that we may differ in our parliamentary conduct; and, without this previous explanation, you might be led to suppose

me as acting on the reserve, and unmindful of this long intimacy and friendship, which is far from the case; or, what would hurt me more, that you might entertain the idea that I was swayed by unworthy, official, and party motives. None such exist.

I act from what I think to be conscientiously right, but, at the same time, with great uneasiness, lest it should ultimately be in contradiction with your views of public affairs; and this, I hope, every line I have written will serve to prove.

I should, were I to listen to the affection I bear you, be inclined to dwell longer on a point where I take so warm an interest; but you cannot, my dear Canning, suppose it has escaped my observation, that, for these last eighteen months, you have ceased to communicate with me with the same confidence and unreserve which, till then, you were wont to show me from our earliest acquaintance. This circumstance checks my pen, but it does not alter or weaken the sincere regard with which I am, my dear Canning,

Yours, most truly and affectionately,

MALMESBURY.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Admiralty, 6 o'clock, October 23, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I have time only just to tell you that Milnes is come to town, and having had a long conference with Perceval, and also one with Canning, he has determined, after hearing both sides, heartily to support Perceval, but declines office altogether.

This latter resolution, which surprised me exceedingly, is founded upon real and unaffected diffidence. I think it is a great pity, both for him and for us, as he would be more useful in office than out of it. The War Office has consequently come to me, conditionally however, upon arrangements I will presently mention. In the meantime, Perceval having very handsomely given me the option of the Cabinet with the War Office (if I go to it), I thought it best, on the whole, to decline it; and I trust, although you seemed to be of a different opinion at first, you will not, on the whole, think I was wrong. The office is one which does not invariably, or indeed usually, go with the Cabinet.

A seat there was consequently not an object to me for appearance sake; and, considering how young I am in office, people in general, so far from expecting to see me in the Cabinet by taking the War Office, would perhaps only wonder how I got there. With the Exchequer it would have been necessary; but, with the War Office, certainly not; and the business of the department will, I take it, be quite sufficient to occupy one's time, without attending Cabinet Councils. It would, undoubtedly, have been highly interesting, but, for all purposes of business or debate, Perceval will, of course, keep one sufficiently informed to answer all one's wishes, at first at least. The arrangements on which the doubt I mentioned in the first page depends are, the determination of Rose upon the Exchequer, which, in consequence of Milnes' refusal, has been offered to him, and the final decision of Dundas about the War Department, which, it seems not impossible, Lord Melville may not let him take. Lord Melville is, I fancy, in

high dudgeon at a letter more candid, perhaps, than cautious, which Perceval wrote to him, explaining as delicately as possible, at the same time without reserve or limitation, the reasons which had induced him, absolutely, to decline offering Lord Melville an official situation, but concluding, by the proffer of an earldom, as a testimony of the approbation of the King of his long and distinguished services. This offer Lord Melville refuses rather sulkily; and upon the reasons and decision of Perceval observes, 'that they are unfounded in fact, and unwise in policy,' alluding to the ground on which Perceval placed his resolve—the apprehension of the popular clamour which his taking office might create against the Government.

The situations which Perceval wishes to keep unsettled till to-morrow, with the intention of giving me one or other, according as it may best suit his other arrangements, are, the War Office, the Treasurer of the Navy, and the Board of Trade, should Rose take the Exchequer. If Dundas does not come in, Ryder will probably have the War Department. Dundas will be a great loss. Yours ever,

PALMERSTON.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Cowes, October 24, 1809.

My dear father,—I have enclosed your letter to Canning under another cover. It will probably (viewing it as a State paper) be considered by him as a mild *declaration of war*; for I fear, if we determine on giving a decided and constant support to the measures of this Government, that what you allude to as *eventual* may

be considered as *probable* if not *certain*, and that I shall find myself very shortly arrayed under banners already very evidently hostile to his. It would not become *me* to write to Canning in the tone *you* have done. I have no right either to give him advice or reproof. All I can do is to regret that I cannot go with him the lengths that he may be led into by his conduct on a late occasion; but I really feel great hesitation in determining on a decidedly *opposite* line of Politics to his. It would be very grating to my feelings, and would certainly be deemed by many discreditable personally to me and to *me only*, were I, after filling so intimately confidential a situation as I have done under him, to take as it were the first *public* opportunity of throwing off the connection. I also cannot help feeling that, by supporting the present Government, I inevitably attach myself to men whom, in a political point of view, I consider as weak and inefficient in the mass. Taking them individually, there is not one who has energy or abilities such as are requisite: on the contrary, several are slothful, timorous, or selfish politicians; and yet, when they are driven out with Perceval, which they obviously will be, and take their seats on the Opposition benches, I must either (as will in consistency be expected of me) place myself at *their* backs, or once more tack about without knowing whither to steer, becoming either a courtier or a no party man.

I do not approve of non-attendance in Parliament; but I really think, in my individual instance, it is the only method I can pursue with a view to my own feelings, or to my public character. If C. is admitted into a Government with Lords Grey and Grenville, I shall be

inclined to think them capable of forming, with all their drawbacks, the strongest one that could now be framed in this country. That this will be the case is more than probable, and such must be the impression on the minds of the present Ministers, who are much better able to collect the public opinion on the subject than I am. They would certainly, therefore, be acting more fairly and wisely, were they to declare to the King their inadequacy to conduct his government, and to urge him rather to receive the others quietly at the present moment (laying the necessity and odium of doing so at its *right* door), than to persevere in dragging on their precarious existence to the meeting of Parliament, and then to see their adversaries forced into their places on some factious and violent question which will give a colour to the transaction totally different from that which it now would have borne. What vexes me more than anything in these matters is, that I fear there is a shade of difference of opinion between us, and that you are for going *farther* than I am.

It is a most embarrassing moment for me, as evidently the events of the next six months must influence my future political life. I felt, when I accepted a confidential office under Canning, that I was attaching myself to him, and said so at the time. Were I now to support those with whom he is at variance, I break with him, and form a new connection, with the intention of breaking that as soon as the present Ministers lose their places. I cannot help feeling that this is open to animadversion, and that I never can expect that I can be clear of the charge of political insincerity. Had the friends of this Government, as it was first formed, more generally expressed

that opinion, which they all must entertain, namely, that as a fragment it cannot stand, they must have told the King so; but either this has not been the case, or *some* near him have been shabbily tenacious of office, and much injury will be done to the country while they do exist, and still more when they are driven out.

I think I may now bring my observations to a conclusion, and cease to dwell on as unpleasant a subject as I ever had to deliberate on.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Admiralty, October 25, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—Nothing is settled as yet, but Dundas has positively refused the War Department, and I am told Rose also the Exchequer, and that Perceval means to offer the latter to Charles Long. The defection of Dundas may be hurtful, as it will a little shake the allegiance of the Scotch members; but he will certainly support us, though he does not take office. The idea of having recourse to the Doctor seems again revived in consequence of this circumstance, but I know not upon what foundation. I am to dine to-morrow at Perceval's to meet Milnes and Lowther, and shall probably hear something more about my own fate.

We have had very bad accounts from Flushing. There are but 3,500 men fit for duty out of the whole garrison, and the enemy are rapidly increasing their preparations for attack. The Cabinet have not yet decided whether the island of Walcheren is to be, or indeed can be, retained or not.

The officers of the two services have given twenty different and contradictory opinions on the subject, and Strachan himself has changed his mind three or four times about it. His present opinion is, that it is not tenable without an enormous naval force amounting to what would be equivalent to eighteen sail of the line, besides the same fleet which would be necessary for the blockade if we had not the island. The navy continues perfectly healthy, but the land sickness seems rather to increase than abate.

Ever, my dear Lord Malmesbury,

Yours affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

P.S.—I understand Lord Grenville has lately communicated to Perceval through Lord Sidmouth, or some of his friends, that, had he not totally mistaken the meaning of Perceval's letter, he should have been disposed to treat. He understood it to ask his accession to the offices then vacant; but, if it had been proposed to him to head the Government, and make a new one including both parties, he should have accepted. This of course will lead to nothing, as it means but little; but it may turn out that Lord Sidmouth would not come in if we were to ask him, should there have been any great intercourse between him and Lord Grenville.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Admiralty, October 27, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—Upon Rose's declining to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Long, I believe,

giving the same answer, it was yesterday settled that I should be Secretary at War, and I accordingly entered upon my functions this morning. There appears to be full employment in the office; but, at the same time, not of a nature to alarm me, and I think I shall like it very much. Lord Melville has relented, and Dundas accordingly yesterday agreed to take office; but he has preferred returning to the Board of Control. It is Richard Ryder to whom the War Department was offered, and I should think he will, or indeed must, take it, as there is no one else in fact to whom it can well be given, as we want a Secretary of State in the House of Commons. Lord Harrowby has agreed to take the Foreign Department if Lord Wellesley declines it.

I dined yesterday at Perceval's at Ealing with Milnes and Lowther.[1] The former, I am almost inclined to think, will remain staunch to us. His present opinion at least is very strong for our returning: he expressed his hopes that 'we should be able to fix this *honest little fellow* firmly in his seat, as it is a struggle of principle on the one hand against trimming and political intrigue on the other.' He seems very much steadier than he used to be, and I should not be surprised if he were to fag very hard in Parliament; and then, if he acquires, as he will, a certain confidence in himself, and Perceval still keeps the office open for him, it is not improbable that he may take it before the Session is over. Percy has, as I expected, refused the Admiralty, and Lord Mulgrave has offered it to Lowther, who will most probably take it. He seems to wish it himself, and Lord Lonsdale will no doubt be glad to get him

[1] Afterwards Earl of Lonsdale.

employed, with the hope of taking him a little away from the turf. The Jubilee seems to have been very happily celebrated everywhere.

Nothing could be better than its effect in London, and the town appeared in the morning to be as quiet and orderly as could possibly be wished. The public offices and a few other buildings were illuminated, the mob were occupied the whole night in gaping at them, and cheering as any carriage passed by. The only exercise of their sovereign authority was compelling all the coachmen and servants to pull off their hats as they passed the illuminated crown over the Admiralty gate. We were the great attraction, and the bulk of the mob were stationed opposite this building the whole night. Nothing seems yet to be known of the terms of peace, although no doubt can be entertained of its having been signed.[1] But Stahremberg, two days before the news arrived, was presenting papers containing assurances from persons at his Court that peace would not take place, and that they were resolved upon breaking the armistice.

Adieu, my dear Lord Malmesbury.

Ever yours most affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, October 27, 1809.

I believe that Mr. Canning has decided on publishing an account of the late transactions so far as they relate to Lord Castlereagh and Lord Camden. The friends

[1] Between France and Austria.

of the two latter have so prejudiced the public with their statements, and Mr. Canning has been exposed to such virulent attacks from them; that he does not choose to submit to them any longer: to which consideration may be added, that of Lord Camden's having published *his* account, which has done more to decide Mr. Canning than anything else. I lament the existence of such a necessity, but Mr. Canning's adversaries have to answer for it.

MR. CANNING TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, November 4, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I have delayed returning an answer to your letter in the intention of answering it very much in detail. This I have hitherto been prevented from doing by a business which has occupied all my attention for the last week; and now that I have nearly got to the end of that business, as the result of it will be an exposition of the most detailed kind of my conduct in the transaction which led to the dissolution of the Duke of Rutland's Ministry, and as I shall be enabled to send you a copy of that exposition in the course of next week, I need not now trouble you with a long explanation by letter. I will only say that, unless you are prepared to maintain that there are *no* circumstances in which a public man is at liberty to retire from office, I feel confident that you will think those under which I retired sufficient to justify the step which I took.

To remain, after such usage as I had experienced, would have been to remain degraded and powerless, and at the mercy of such men as Lord Camden bearing all

the burden of their unfitness and just unpopularity, and intrigued against by them in return for that support. The last sentence of your letter would have affected me very sensibly if it had come accompanied with a desire of explanation, and an expression of confident assurance that you should find my motives, when explained, to have been pure and upright, even though (as you might apprehend) mistaken. But, as if *you have had* cause to complain of want of confidence on my part, you have taken your revenge in the most ample manner by deciding against me without explanation; and *if you had not*, you have done me a double injustice. I can only complain in my turn that you have deferred your expostulation till it comes in the shape of a sentence against which it is useless to appeal.

I am nevertheless, my dear Lord Malmesbury, as ever,

Sincerely and affectionately yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

LETTER TO MR. CANNING FROM LORD MALMESBURY.

Park Place, November 6, 1809.

My dear Canning,—I confess I was sensibly hurt at your leaving my letter so many days unnoticed, for, as my only motive for writing it was, by an early and unreserved communication of my sentiments, to prevent a friendship I so highly value as yours being impaired or interrupted, your silence gave me uneasiness. There is, however, so much of kindness in your answer of the 4th, that it has greatly relieved me from this painful apprehension. It was not censure but regret, I intended to express; and this, in consequence of what I heard from

a quarter I conceived the most friendly to you, from one who is now no more.[1] It was what he said to me on September 15th, the morning of the day I went to Claremont, that occasioned my speaking to C. and G. Ellis in the way I then did, and since, my writing to you in the way I have done. Regret and deep concern were the governing feelings of his mind during the whole of this, alas! our last meeting, and they were testified in a manner which quite overcame him. I am anxious to apprise you of this *before* I see your promised statement, lest you may imagine me to have listened to either adverse or prejudiced narrators.

Far, indeed, am I from maintaining so indefensible a doctrine, as to admit that *no* circumstances *can* exist in which a public man should retire from office. All I contended for, and must still contend for, is that, in times like the present, they should be most imperious ones to determine him to take such a step. The circumstances which relate to you will, I am ready to believe, come under this description; and in no case shall I entertain a doubt, that you have acted under the full conviction that you ought not, and could not, act differently.

But regret and concern still remain; and surely you cannot expect or desire I should be without them, when, besides the loss the country sustains by your resignation, it may lead to what I ever thought most unlikely, to a difference of opinion between us on public measures. You do not construe the last paragraph in my letter of October 21 either *fairly* or *kindly*: not *fairly* because it cannot, if read with candour, surely bear the interpre-

[1] Duke of Portland.

tation you put on it, viz. that it is a peremptory and hasty decision without appeal, and that my expostulation comes abruptly in the shape of a *sentence*. It would be worse than absurd had I meant any such thing before I had ascertained whether the misgivings I harboured were grounded, and whether, if grounded, you could not, and would not, assign such substantial reasons for them as would perfectly satisfy me :—not *kindly*, because, after all the circumstances attendant on our long acquaintance, and the knowledge you must have acquired of my character, you could not but suppose that the two considerations you accuse me with having omitted were implied.

Be assured I did and do wish you to prove to me I am in the wrong, *in every respect*, on this occasion ; and that I shall most willingly avow myself to be so on conviction.

Ever, my dear Canning, yours most truly and affectionately,

MALMESBURY.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

War Office, November 9, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I understand that Lord Wellesley has agreed to take office, but under an impression as to what has happened which is not quite correct ; and therefore it is just possible that, when upon his arrival he finds himself to have conceived the case to be stronger than it is, his inclination towards us may be weakened. He understands that a distinct proposition to place him at the head of the Government had

been rejected by Canning, and that was the point on which he went out. Now, in point of fact, what did take place was so nearly tantamount to this, that I cannot conceive it probable that any change can take place in his determination. He clearly understands that the offer now made him, is not to be at the head of the Government but to join it. It has at length been determined to abandon Walcheren. I fear it could not possibly have been retained without an expense infinitely beyond its value, and the peace between France and Austria will at least furnish a pretence for the measure. It is only to be regretted that this decision was not sooner taken, as the Cabinet have for a month had all the documents before them on which it is founded, and in the meantime a great number of lives have been lost by the disorder in the island. I am going to Cambridge this evening to vote at an election for a public orator to-morrow, and return to town on Saturday or Sunday.

I continue to like this office very much. There is a good deal to be done; but if one is confined it is some satisfaction to have some real business to do; and if they leave us in long enough, I trust much may be accomplished in arranging the interior details of the office so as to place it on a respectable footing. Its inadequacy to get through the current business that comes before it is really a disgrace to the country, and the arrear of regimental accounts unsettled is of a magnitude not to be conceived. We are now working at the Treasury to induce them to agree to a plan, proposed originally by Sir James Pulteney, and reconsidered by Granville Levison, by which, I think, we shall provide for the current business, and the arrear

must then be got rid of as well as we can contrive to do it. Adieu, my dear Lord Malmesbury.

Ever yours most affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Park Place, November 17, 1809.

If the account of obligations reciprocally conferred and received between Canning and myself *was* to be balanced, it would appear that *I* have few or none to him, while *he* has many to me. This must be still so fresh in the recollection of many of our common friends, and at the same time so perfectly known to so many persons in public situations, that no explanation or reference to what is past is necessary to establish the facts.

As far as relates to you individually, it is not to *him* you *owe* the place you held in his departments. It was a place you selected from a choice offered you by the *Duke of Portland*, not opposed indeed, but certainly not suggested, by Canning. It was the Duke of Portland who gave you the valuable and envied situation you now possess.[1]

Canning *is* aware of all this, when, as you well remark, he so peremptorily asserts that the Duke of Portland's administration was dissolved, not by the Duke's death, but by the Duke's resignation. The Duke of Portland himself, however, viewed the subject very differently. He told me his retiring from office did not arise from *any political consideration whatever*, but solely

[1] The governorship of the Isle of Wight.

from the exhausted state of his health, and to satisfy the urgent and reiterated entreaties of his family: that could he have foreseen the consequences his resignation had occasioned, he would have *died in office:* that he still considered himself as belonging to the King's Government, and that he could receive no stronger or more gratifying proof of regard from those who professed themselves attached to him than by their continuing to act with and support it. Of Canning the Duke of Portland complained with an asperity quite unusual to him, because, when Canning gave in his resignation to the King, he assigned his chief reason for so doing was that the Duke of Portland was no longer at the head of His Majesty's Government. The King told this to the Duke with great surprise, and the Duke heard it with still greater.

This passed at the levée on September 13, 1809, immediately previous to which Canning had been closeted with the Duke of P., and the Duke told it to me with an agitation and grief he could not suppress on the morning of the 15th. As far, therefore, as a sense of favours conferred is to be brought to account (and it most certainly should in all well-conditioned minds), the whole of it from me and from you is due solely to the Duke of P., and not one particle of it belongs to Canning.

This rests on facts so notorious, that the public judgment cannot be misled in its decision. With respect to private friendships, Canning has rendered his claims on them very slender indeed, since, forgetful of everything which has passed since 1795, and after nearly two years' slight and neglect, he receives the most gentle

expostulation with pique and haughtiness, evades with most awkward sophistry all explanation, and instead of seeking rejects every advance towards reconciliation.

If then I argue right, and it is on broad facts that I argue, we are not called upon by any tie, either of political connection or private friendship, to follow Canning or do as he does. On comparing his time of life and his experience with mine, I do not think I assume too much in saying, that if the reproach of desertion from private friendships and from political principles can apply on this occasion, this reproach, by public suffrage, will belong *to him*, not to me or *you*.

I agree entirely with you as to his superior abilities; also that his principles *have been*, and may till this hour be right; but I see too much restless ambition, too much arrogance, for that is the true word, not to doubt those principles being sufficiently sterling and steady to be shaken and abandoned by the influence of those passions, and then his abilities will become a curse not a blessing to his country. What I say is not, I assure you, on a hasty and convenient conclusion drawn from the story of the day; it is the result of a long and careful observation on the workings of Canning's mind and disposition. As far, therefore, as the proposition goes to Canning, either with reference to what is due to public opinion (on which I set a just value), or with respect to consistency and propriety in our behaviour (on which I set a much higher), I conceive that, if we are shackled at all, it is not by real or apparent claims that Canning has upon us, but on the contrary by those the present Government may and will very justly form, and which we cannot deny with-

out having to state more convincing reâsons than any I can suggest.

Recollect from Pitt's death the pains I took in endeavouring to get rid of the Ministry which followed his, whose talents I did not deny, but whose principles I disliked. Recollect the share I had in March 1807, in the formation of what is called the Portland Ministry, but which was composed entirely of *Pitt's friends*, and was in fact a renewal and prolongation of Pitt's Ministry, that I was on this occasion informed and consulted (previous to their actual appointment) on the choice of every one (Canning included) who was destined to hold Cabinet office; and that, although from my incurable infirmity of deafness I took none myself, yet I was looked upon by them, and indeed looked upon myself, as identified with them. Recollect that every member who remained in the Cabinet after the Duke of Portland's resignation was acquainted with this, and that they separately and collectively (not only from this circumstance but from the support we have hitherto regularly given them) reckon on us, and very fairly, as making an integral part of their administration; and be assured that they, and with them beyond question the public voice, will accuse us of deserting our friends in the hour of need, or of being actuated by selfish views, *unless* we can, *on our legs* in Parliament, prove that they have forfeited every claim to our good opinion and confidence. As to their principles, had they not been such as you and I deemed right and constitutional, we never should have acted with them. From these principles they never have, as I know, deviated; and on that score they are still entitled to our support. For,

depend upon it, there is nothing left but a perseverance in *right principles*, for the salvation of not only the country in general, but for that of the security and duration of the comforts and prosperity of every individual in it. The measures of this Government may be censured as imperfect, both in their formation and in their execution; but, since 1793, what measures has any Government conceived or adopted that have attained their object? Yet you will admit that, during Pitt's administration, as wise ones as the mind of man could devise, and the concurrence of a powerful nation second, were planned and attempted. Let us, therefore, look for the cause of our danger elsewhere than on the easy plan of taxing with incapacity or supineness those to whom the King has confided the direction of his affairs. Let us seek for it in two most manifest but most melancholy truths: the one, a total failure of public virtue of every description on the Continent (where the evil is most and more justly felt), both in sovereigns and subjects; and next in the uncommon genius of Buonaparte, which, not to admit and *not to fear*, is to deny the evidence of our senses.

To resist this is *all in all*; for, anything short of *determined* resistance, any concession or compromise, is only delaying defeat; and that party who feels this with the strongest conviction will make the *best Ministers. Right* principles *on this* point with moderate talents are safer, much safer for us, than the most brilliant talents with nervous principles. This brings me to where I set out, to Canning. He had, and may still have, those excellent principles; but it is evident he has something in him and on which he allows himself to act that pre-

dominates over them, or else he would not, under any pretence, have quitted his post at this moment. *If* his object is to be Prime Minister, the attempt was as ill-timed as the means were ill-imagined. *If* he was dissatisfied with measures in the settling of which his colleagues overruled him, he should have withdrawn at once from amongst them, as, before him, every one, even those of the highest character, did, without supposing himself, what they never supposed themselves to be, of such extraordinary magnitude as that the public must be a party to all that concerned him, and that he ought and had a right to appeal to their judgment forgetful of the respect due to the King, who, according to his own avowal, treated him most graciously when he gave in his resignation, and to the Government the King was desirous to maintain. I cannot admit such conduct to be right in a man who has been in the situation Canning filled. He cannot be ignorant that to the King we owe the existence and preservation of every blessing we still enjoy; yet Canning places by his resignation the King in the distressing predicament, either of appointing for his Ministers those whose opinions he reprobates and who are personally obnoxious to him, or else to suffer his business and the interests of his kingdom, at this difficult moment, to be carried on by a broken and disjointed administration. Yet being so, its probably short duration is no reason for not supporting it. If it is to fall, to what are we to look? To the coming in of a party whose system is known, whose abilities have been tried, and which we may with reason apprehend will either end by joining, or by opening a door to, the Reformers and Republicans, and with that terminates our constitution.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

St. James's Street, November 17, 1809.

After I had written and sent off my letter of Wednesday last, Mr. Canning afforded me the opportunity, which I had for some days past wished for, of mentioning to him your Lordship's sentiments on the present situation of affairs. Until I had this opportunity I considered myself restrained by your Lordship's injunctions from speaking on the subject, but I was very glad to be released from them. What I stated to Mr. Canning as from your Lordship was, that you had the sincerest regard and affection for him, and that nothing would give you greater pain than to find, that your feelings of private friendship and of public duty were irreconcilable with each other; but that no man could expect from another that the *latter* should be sacrificed to the *former*. That you were of opinion that whatever cause Mr. Canning might have to complain personally of his late colleagues, or of their inefficiency, or however unequal they might be to meet the dangers with which they were surrounded, yet that you considered their principles as sound, and their intentions as good; that their principles were, in fact, those on which Mr. Canning himself had taken office, and which you considered as essential in the present times to the support of the Crown and the salvation of the country. That these principles, therefore, you should feel it to be your duty to support.

I then mentioned, in general terms, that your Lordship was far from condemning any views on the part of

Mr. Canning to the attainment of the premiership ; that, on the contrary, you thought it an object of laudable ambition in any man possessed of his talents, and that you would be glad to see him fill that post; but that you thought he had by his conduct flung himself further from it than he would have been had he pursued a different conduct; and I concluded by saying, that you still appeared to think that were he (Mr. Canning), on the opening of the Session, to declare his approbation of the *principles* of his late colleagues, and his determination to support them so far as he could conscientiously do so, that he would shortly be called, by the country, to the post of First Minister.

Mr. Canning heard me with attention, but said little in reply. He appeared to feel the kindness of your Lordship's expressions of good will towards himself, and agreed with yours to the dangers with which the country was menaced; and he seemed to feel the necessity of maintaining those principles on which he had hitherto acted. On this subject he said, that he never had had any intention of joining the Opposition. With respect to the course he had pursued, he said that it would have been worse than useless to have acted otherwise than he had done; that he could not have remained in, after all that had passed, to any useful purpose; and that, feeling convinced of this, all that remained for him was to retire. This, I believe, I may venture to say is a faithful report of what passed between us. I am particular in relating it, because, at the same time that I wished to do justice to your Lordship's sentiments, I felt that I had no right to say more than you had desired me to say. I trust I have not

done so, nor that I have said less. In the course of our walk round the grounds of Gloucester Lodge we had much incidental conversation.

I could not resist this opportunity of ascertaining the *precise* ground of the late Duke of Portland's resignation; and I can now assure your Lordship, that the *immediate* cause of it was the letter from Mr. Perceval urging his Grace to resign, and stating as his (Mr. Perceval's) reason for urging it, the facility it would afford to a *new* arrangement. In walking with Mr. Canning this morning from Lincoln's Inn, this subject was again started, and he *desired* me to inform you, in confirmation of what I have already said to you, that, on August 28th, Mr. Perceval called on Mr. Canning to press him to recommend to the Duke to resign; that Mr. Canning declined doing so, giving as his reason that he had once already, on a former occasion, recommended this measure to his Grace, and that he could not again renew it. I should have said before that Mr. Perceval, in pressing Mr. Canning to urge this measure, gave as his express reason for so doing, that by his Grace's resignation a cover would be afforded to Lord Castlereagh's retirement from the War Department; that Mr. Canning heard no more of this for a week; and that it was on September 3rd, or 4th, that Mr. Perceval (on hearing that Mr. Canning had requested the Duke to notify to Lord Wellesley His Majesty's intentions to give him the seals of the War Department) wrote to the Duke the letter which I have already mentioned, which letter precipitated the very measure which produced Mr. Canning's resignation on finding that all faith was broken with him. I cannot help thinking that your Lordship

will feel, however you may regret the circumstance of Mr. Canning's resignation at this eventful period, that it was impossible for Mr. Canning to remain in office with his late colleagues to any useful purpose, after the transaction I have just related.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

St. James's Street, November 20, 1809.

I will not again enter on the subject of Mr. Canning's resignation. I only wish to remark, that it was on August 28th (which I believe I stated in my last) that Mr. Perceval had his interview with Mr. Canning, and, on September 3rd or 4th, that the former wrote his letter to the Duke of Portland urging him to resign. I feel convinced that Mr. Canning had the sincerest regard for your Lordship, and I think I may say that his silence is owing to a very different motive than want of friendship towards you. That *motive* will soon cease. In three or four days more I shall probably have to send your Lordship what at present engages all his time and attention.

LORD FITZHARRIS TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Heron Court, November 20, 1809.

My dear father,—I have read over your letter of the 17th very attentively, and have thought over the subject-matter so much, and for so long a time, that further deliberation on it will not be of much avail. I am naturally inclined, for every reason, to yield my opinion to yours; but, on recurring to your correspondence, I cannot help thinking that, from having a *bias*

towards the present Government, you have become a stronger advocate in their favour than I thought you would have been. What leads me to this opinion is that part of your statement where you say, that the *present* administration may very justly form claims on us for support; and that, were we to refuse it, the *public voice* would be raised against *us* for abandoning them.

Now I cannot consider Lord Liverpool or Perceval *pure Pittites*, and I thought that *you* were consulted in 1806 by the Duke of Portland as his private and intimate friend and adviser. If you paved the way to any of their appointments the obligation is on *their* part not on *yours*; but I doubt *their* having any feelings of this sort. As the argument is perfectly new to me, I confess that it rather increases the anxiety I feel on the subject. As I never had a notion of our being under obligations to any one but the Duke of Portland, or connected with any one but Canning, I thought we were, considering the line of conduct we should pursue, unfettered by any such ties as those you now allude to.

From the line the Opposition took on the Duke of York's business, and especially on Middleton's motion, I felt that they were evidently awake to the dangerous language of the day and determined to oppose it. It therefore appeared to me, that less danger was to be apprehended from their *violence* than from the *weakness* of the present Government, and I still think that Perceval's system of concession and candour will do more harm, or as much as Lord Grey's or Lord Grenville's principles, whatever they may be. With Canning, I think, we are broken beyond redemption.

It appearing, however, to me to be *your* confirmed

intention of supporting Perceval's administration, I shall certainly (as I feel it my duty to do) accede to your wishes on the subject, as no *middle* line you state *can* be pursued. I must also adopt, in a choice of difficulties, Perceval as my political leader, for it comes to this at last :— Support him for six weeks (and longer he will not need it) in the next session of Parliament, and I am enlisted in his ranks for ever. For on what plea could I *desert* them? He goes into Opposition; is attacked for the measures of his Government; he calls for my support in *adversity*, can I refuse it? You may, however, now consider me as having decided to take this line.

Thus ends my reply on this as important as it is to me unpleasant subject to think or to write upon; still more so must it be to reduce theory into practice on it. Adieu.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Park Place, November 23, 1809.

My dear James,—I received yesterday your letter of the 20th, with which I cannot but be gratified, as it proves the honourable uprightness of your mind, and at the same time your affection for me. But, greatly as I value this affection, I am very far from desiring it should lead you to a conduct which you yourself do not think to be strictly right. What was sent from Winchester was not intended, I assure you, to dictate or prescribe an opinion to you; but only, as far as I was able, to supply you with the best materials for your coming to a safe and becoming one.

In drawing your conclusions from them I think you a

little depart from the premises. If our political attachment was to the Duke of Portland, we act consistently by continuing to act with a Ministry he framed, which he withdrew from only on the near approach of death, and with the strongest expression possible of a wish it should be supported by his friends; we are simply following up our sentiments of regard for him, and not entering into any new connection; much less is it enrolling ourselves either under Perceval, or any other political leader whatever. This I should reprobate full as much as you can. I will neither by profession or in practice ever pledge myself to vote with any Minister indiscriminately on all and every measure, and certainly will vote for none that I did not feel would be as defensible when he was out of office, as when he proposed them in office. If Perceval is hurried out *unfairly*, he ought to be supported and defended; if by his own misconduct, certainly not. With respect to the nature of our obligations to the present Government, we are, strictly speaking, fettered by none; and all I meant to convey was that, as a general principle, whether we are the party obliged or the party obliging, our conduct should be influenced by nearly the same consideration; for it is to be supposed that we never confer favour on those we misesteem and think ill of, or ever receive favours from them. It is precisely in this relation that we, or rather I, stand with regard to the present Government. We have been reciprocally friendly to each other without any great balance of obligation on either side; and, till some notorious act is done by them sufficient to forfeit our good opinion, I think the public voice would be raised against me if I deserted them.

Towards the King also, for whom I feel not the servile attachment of a courtier (for I never approach him), but the much stronger one which arises from a full conviction (and this I know to be equally *your* sentiments), that to him and to him only we owe all that we still possess of comfort and security. Towards the King, it would in my mind be ungracious and even ungrateful to abandon, without any ostensible reason, a Ministry of his choice; and become instrumental, in however small a degree, to the opening the door to let one in which we know would make him miserable. You are quite right in supposing we are under obligations to no one but the Duke of Portland, and that our connection, if with any one, is with Canning.

It is because I am mindful of the first of these positions that I write as I do; and for the second, if the connection is broken off, it is voluntarily and most unaccountably so by Canning, not by us. It is enough that he knows this; for his wisdom, if not his conscience, will close his mouth; and he will never venture reproaches which, if explained (as then must be the case), would recoil on him with redoubled force. But Canning in distinct terms professes his intention not to go into opposition; and this again leaves us (as far as he is concerned) perfectly free agents; and from the exercise of this free agency I trust we never shall be driven by any threats or temptations held out by men in power, or by any clamour faction or private pique may raise:

> Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
> Nec vultus instantis tyranni.

At the same time this free agency, to be either respected or useful, must be regulated by a systematic consistency,

and tempered with a fair allowance (when we appreciate measures and abilities) for the unprecedented difficulties of the times, and for the imperfection attendant on all human establishments. I will carry this right of free agency still further on our parts, and even say, that if either Lords Grenville or Grey, or any other of the Opposition leaders are called into government, and being there act on principles I approve, I should consider myself and *you* at full liberty to support them. But I will wait till this is proved beyond doubt, and not anticipate, still less rely on, a possible revolution in their character and system, or draw any very favourable inference, because some of their adherents were sagacious enough to foresee that the engines which set in motion such *mannequins* as Wardle and Maddox had in view, not the overthrow of any particular Government, but of all orderly and constitutional Governments whatever. I admit with you that Lords Liverpool and Westmoreland and Perceval are not *pure* Pittites; but Lords Bathurst, Harrowby, Camden, and Mulgrave are so beyond a question; these make a very considerable portion of the Cabinet, and with them I have been long and intimately acquainted.

It is evident from the above correspondence between Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Canning, that a certain coolness had succeeded to the intimate friendship which had existed for so many years between them, and I find a clue to the fact in the following extract from my father's (Lord Fitzharris's) private journal:

'The greatest men have their little failings. Canning's connexion with our family, from the ties of friend-

ship and the regard, indeed admiration, that he had for Lord Malmesbury's abilities, gave rise to insidious paragraphs in the *Morning Chronicle* (the Whig paper), insinuating that "Canning was at nurse, and could not help himself without Lord Malmesbury's aid." He was peculiarly sensitive in such matters, weakly so; and a flimsy article written in a newspaper by a hired hand, or dictated by one who knew his foible, ought never to have alienated him from us, as it certainly did for the time.'

It is also probable that the older statesman forgot the progress of years, and chafed at the growing independence of his younger friend, whom he had affected from his earliest youth; and whom he had introduced to Pitt on one of those visits which the latter frequently paid to Lord Malmesbury at Park Place, from the Saturday till the following Monday. Canning showed no forgetfulness of earlier days when, as Premier, he offered me of his own accord, on my leaving Oxford in 1828, an attachéship to Petersburg.—EDITOR.

MR. PERCEVAL TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Downing Street, November 23, 1809.

My dear Lord,—Will you excuse my taking the liberty of representing to your Lordship the anxiety which I feel for the success of the Lord Chancellorship of Oxford, and also my adding my wish that you would have the goodness to vote against Lord Grenville. I conceive that the impression of his success would be extremely prejudicial to the present Government, and

to the interest of the question upon which Lord Grenville rears his standard against the King.[1] After all that has recently passed between me and our common friends in Government, I feel that I should require apology in writing to you thus freely, without knowing your sentiments upon these events, if the question with which this application is connected was not one more of general policy than of the particular propriety of conduct of any individual, either remaining in Government or retiring from it. If on any part of those transactions to which I am alluding, your Lordship should feel desirous of receiving any explanation of my conduct, I really should receive the question for that explanation as a great honour and a great favour.

It may be interesting to you to know that Parliament will meet on January 23rd, and it certainly will be interesting to me to know whether we may hope to see you at the opening of the Session.

I am, my dear Lord, yours very truly,

S. Perceval.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

War Office, November 24, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I regret much to find that it is not in my power to execute my intention of going to Park Place to-morrow. I am glad to find that Lord Wellesley[2] has so readily accepted the offer made to him of the Foreign Office, and that he does it with such cheerful views of the prospect before him.

[1] Roman Catholic Emancipation.

[2] Eldest brother of Lord Wellington. An appointment of the highest importance, at a time when he required all the support possible in Spain.

He writes to Arbuthnot that, although the present situation of affairs in Europe was certainly far from promising, he yet hoped that much might still be accomplished; and felt at all events confident that as much could be done as had been performed by any Ministry since the death of Mr. Pitt.

He was to set out in the 'Donegal' immediately, and may be expected to arrive in the course of a week or ten days. It was in consequence of reading all the papers and correspondence which had passed among the different actors in the late 'Comedy of Errors' conveyed to him by Mr. Sydenham, that he determined to join Perceval. Arbuthnot told me yesterday, that Canning or his friends give out that *he*, Canning, persuaded Milnes not to take office; that Milnes asked his opinion of the propriety of his doing so; and that, on his advising him not, Milnes said that reasons which had occurred to himself weighed against the acceptance of office, and that Canning's opinion had finally turned the scale. How far any thing of this sort may have passed between them it is impossible to say; but I am quite convinced that, if there is any faith to be placed in human nature, Milnes left London yesterday resolved to support Perceval; and that, whatever considerations might have operated in persuading him to decline office, a leaning to Canning was not among the number. I find old —— has a strong national propensity to a job. He sent me a letter the other day to say, that the King, having signified his pleasure that General D. should be made a Commissioner for managing

Chelsea Hospital, he requested I would make out a warrant appointing him one accordingly.

It struck me that this was so very objectionable a thing, and one for which I should perhaps be held so personally responsible, that I communicated the thing to Perceval, who fully agreed with me as to the impropriety of the appointment, and the affair has in consequence been stopped.

The Treasury are endeavouring to sound the disposition of members by letters announcing the time fixed for the meeting of Parliament; but, generally speaking, they do not seem apprehensive of any great defalcation.

Some speculating politicians will probably not attend at first, and some votes will be unavailable the first day or two, from their seats being vacated by office; but it appears to be thought that, if we stand the first brunt of attack, we shall rather gain than lose strength. Petty's[1] election to the Upper House is a great circumstance for us; not so much from the harm which he would have done us by his individual attacks, as from the unity and vigour the Opposition would have acquired by placing him (ostensibly at least) at their head; a situation for which he was well qualified, but into which there is not another individual among them whom they can with equal advantage elect. It is supposed Tierney will succeed Ponsonby, who decidedly retires; but Tierney is not the man whom many on that side of the House would willingly follow. Adieu, my dear Lord Malmesbury. Ever yours affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

[1] Afterwards Marquis of Lansdowne.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

St. James's Street, November 25, 1809.

My Lord,—The accompanying printed letters will be my best excuse for my last four days' silence, in the course of which I have been constantly employed, either on or about them. The only intelligence that I have heard is that Lord Wellesley decidedly takes office. He may be expected in a few days.

Your Lordship's name is on the list to whom this publication is to be sent, but I was desirous of your having an early copy.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

St. James's Street, November 27, 1809.

I have received your letter of this morning. I have only time to say that Lord Wellesley is arrived at Plymouth, and will be in town to-morrow. His friends say, quoting an expression in his letters, that he is coming 'to make an administration as strong as any Mr. Pitt ever had.'

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

St. James's Street, December 4, 1809.

I had not time to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of Friday by the same post which brought it to me. I regret the delay, because your Lordship's letter was one which could not be too soon answered.

I fully and entirely subscribe to the justness of the sentiments it conveys. I see it *now* exactly in the light

in which your Lordship has placed the subject; and I regret the more that I did not sooner see it in that light. I am not, however, ashamed of being corrected by your Lordship; nor am I afraid of not obtaining your pardon when I fairly avow how much I was to blame.

For, to say the truth, I feel that I am much more blameable than Mr. Canning in the present business. It was at the close of a hurried conversation that I had with Mr. Canning at Albany, that *he* happened incidentally to mention, that he had not yet answered your last letter. I replied that I wished he would do so. In answer to which Mr. Canning said,' I will go down to Park Place in my way to Oxford and pass a night there, if you think Lord Malmesbury can receive me.' In consequence of this answer I asked him if I should mention his intention; to which he replied in the affirmative, and on this my letter was founded. I will fully own to your Lordship that I have so long anxiously desired that you and Mr. Canning should meet, that I volunteered my services on this occasion in a way which I should not perhaps have done had I had a little more time for reflection. Mr. Canning is not himself perhaps always strictly alive *aux bienséances*; but his one thousand amiable, good, and great qualities more than atone for the want of them. I am quite sure that, in what he has done, there has not been the most distant feeling of disrespect towards your Lordship; and that, on the contrary, his affection is as warm as ever towards you.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, December 5, 1809.

I feel grateful for your Lordship's kind expressions towards me. I will not say that they are more than I merit; for, if I know anything of myself, I do deserve them.

I had much rather at any time act than profess; but, after a sixteen years' trial, I flatter myself that I may have credit with your Lordship for the sincerest regard and attachment.

Lord Wellesley has been here once since his return; the general opinion is that he will kiss hands to-morrow.

From an article in the *Post* yesterday it would seem that he is to have the vacant blue ribbon. Mr. Canning will most probably tell your Lordship what passed between him and Lord Wellesley on their meeting. I really have not the means of sending any early news. I do not now like to go to the Foreign Office lest I should be suspected of being a spy.

P.S.—I am setting off and take my leave of Mr. Canning, and I shall do it with more real regret than I am willing to express. He has been uniformly kind to me, and my affection to his person is equal to my admiration of his talents.

MR. CANNING TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Gloucester Lodge, December 5, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I desired Ross to tell you, that if you were at home and would like to receive

me on my way to Oxford, I would dine and sleep at Park Place on Monday next the 11th. His report is favourable, but I should wish to have a confirmation of it from yourself. I shall come only from Sunning Hill on Monday morning, and shall therefore be able to be with you in time to answer your last letter by word of mouth before dinner. My kindest remembrances to Lady Malmesbury,

Ever, my dear Lord Malmesbury, most truly and affectionately yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

THE HON. AND REV. A. HARRIS TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Whichwood Park, December 15, 1809.

The poll at Oxford closed yesterday evening after having been open from nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, continuing through the whole of Wednesday night without intermission. Lord Grenville has carried it by thirteen votes! *Horribile dictu!* The University is disgraced, and one of the great barriers against Catholic Emancipation removed. Throughout the whole business there has been a great deal of unfair and undignified dealing. Had the Duke started earlier and taken proper measures, I have no doubt he would have succeeded. It was only by strong solicitation that he was induced to come forward at all. Latterly he had but very slight hopes of success, and did not seem at all disappointed when he heard the event. I came here yesterday from Oxford, and shall remain till Monday, when I go to Park Place, where my father writes me word there is to be a ball on Tuesday,

whether upon any occasion *extraordinary* or *ordinary* I cannot tell. I found Canning here: he has been at Park Place, which I am glad of, as it has produced a complete cure of any misunderstanding which may have existed between my father and him, and I now believe that they are as *good friends as ever*. I am the only male here that is not gone hunting. The party consists of Lord and Lady A. Somerset, Miss Boscawen, and Lord Apsley and his brother.

Ever your affectionate brother,

A. Harris.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

War Office, December 21, 1809.

My dear Lord Malmesbury,—I am very fearful it will not be in my power to visit you at Park Place this Christmas, as, if I am able to leave town for a couple of days, I must go down to Cambridge.

This is the best time of seeing the Johnians collected; and, under the present circumstances, it would be unwise to lose an occasion of maintaining one's ground among them. There is, I believe, no foundation whatever for the rumours of resignations and disputes: of the latter, the Cabinet appear to have had enough to satisfy them. Nor is there any truth in the report of overtures having being received from France for a congress, or other negotiation. There has been some sort of communication about an exchange of prisoners, but it is doubtful whether it will lead to anything. Perceval seems to feel very confident as to the meeting of Parliament.

It is intended to lay before the House all the official

correspondence relative to the expedition, but to resist any further inquiry, unless, in the course of debate, anything should be urged by persons connected with either of the two services which should place the question in a different point of view from that in which it now stands. The Persian Ambassador was highly pleased with his reception the other day, and, on passing a long stand of hackney coaches soon after leaving his house, he was told they were equipages drawn up ready to follow in his train; at which he expressed himself much flattered. He was also much struck, on being informed by Sir Gore Ouseley that the immense crowd of people who lined the streets as he passed were not assembled by compulsion, but were collected of their own accord to see him pass; and he considered it as a very convincing proof of the cordiality and good will felt towards him and his sovereign by the people of this country. He speaks English, and upon the King observing to Sir George Ouseley that he appeared to speak Persian very fluently, the Persian replied, 'Yes, sir, better than I do!' He is to make a grand entry in the course of ten days, and it is intended to hire all the *glass coaches* in London to do him honour.

Adieu, my dear Lord Malmesbury.

Ever yours most affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

1810.

One of the secret stipulations of the treaty made by Napoleon with Austria, after his decisive victory of Wagram, was his marriage with the Archduchess Maria Louisa. This took place after his divorce from the Empress Josephine in April, 1810. Our army under Lord Wellington occupied Portugal. During this year he won the battle of Busaco, and retreating on the lines of Torres Vedras maintained his position against the French army for ten weeks, until they were forced to retire.

LORD BATHURST TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Curzon Street, January 30, 1810.

Dear Lord Malmesbury,—Although I am no longer in the Foreign Office, I must claim your promise, and beg your opinion on a question of diplomacy, of which I am as ignorant as any foreign Secretary of State ever was. The subject of my inquiry is, the provisional agreement signed by Mr. Erskine in America.

This agreement, in the shape of a note, undertakes for the withdrawing certain orders of Council at a definite time mentioned in that note, stating that he is authorised to declare so. This note is accepted and acted upon by the American Government. Now, the questions I have to ask you upon this subject are, Is a

Minister Plenipotentiary authorised to make such engagements, by virtue of his original powers given him on his appointment? If not, and if he must be understood to derive such authority by some powers given subsequently, is it not usual to show the full powers first, or at least record them in the instrument itself if they are full powers; and, if they are special, does it not become as necessary to produce such special power?

Every thing in fact depends upon the manner you will answer the first question, at least it appears so to me; for if the Minister in making the agreement went beyond his general powers, the party accepting such agreement ought to have been sure that he had some authority to make it. It is, I believe, certain that Buonaparte has most unexpectedly seized lately some American ships, which places that Government in great embarrassment. I will not trouble you with a long letter. I wish I could add anything worth communicating. *We* are not strong, but I believe the Opposition are beginning to understand that, without a leader in the House of Commons, they would be *weaker*, if they were to come in. If they had sense, they would not have missed the opportunity of gaining real strength. I am, my dear Lord, very faithfully yours,

BATHURST.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD BATHURST.

Park Place, February 2, 1810.

My dear Lord Bathurst,—No engagement between two contracting parties, under whatever shape or denomination it is made, can be binding unless full powers are at the time produced by both. These are said

always to be exchanged, and on this exchange each party has a right to insist; but, except in the solitary instance which occurred to me when at Lisle, the simple communication of them has always been deemed sufficient.

If Mr. Erskine, when he first was sent to America, had full powers *under the Great Seal* enabling him to sign a treaty; and if these full powers were both general and special, it would certainly give a degree of validity to the provisional agreement he signed for withdrawing the orders of Council, though indisputably it would not barr, or even weaken, the King's right to refuse his ratification; but, if Mr. Erskine rested *his* authority, and the Americans *their* belief, solely on *his* stating verbally to them that he was authorised to declare so, and empowered to take that step; and that, while the negotiation was pending, nothing more was produced or required by either of the parties, I should conceive the instrument he signed to be like an unaccepted bill, mere waste paper, until it was duly honoured: Mr. Erskine incurs voluntarily the hazard of drawing it, and the Americans as voluntarily that of discounting it.

Mr. Erskine went out with nothing but mere instructions from the Secretary of State, without any full powers *at all*; which, unless on special missions, is the usual practice; or if the powers he had were confined to any one *single* point, in the first case, he had no authority to sign the agreement he did; at least it could not be considered as binding, without reference to his Court; and, in the second case, he certainly must have put a very forced construction on his full powers,

and one not easy to maintain, if limited as they were, he ventured under them to pledge his Court *definitely* to any specific engagement not set forth in them. Mr. Erskine might indeed have signed one *sub spe rati*, and his not knowing, or not acting after this common mode of proceeding, appears to have produced all the mischief. I should have said in its place, that in all diplomatic engagements the first article is to recite the full powers with which the contracting parties are invested. This is never omitted. I am far from being sure I have answered your questions satisfactorily, but I have done my best. I presume you will think it right to regulate our conduct towards America by that Buonaparte observes towards her, without paying any regard either to her advances or her threats. I fear neither Government or what was formerly called Opposition is sufficiently strong. I could bear with the weakness of the latter if I did not apprehend that from the weakness of both, the Levellers, Reformers, and Republicans will gain a dangerous degree of strength. Surely, Perceval is too candid and conceding—as to the first, he is a free agent, and might correct it, the second, for aught I know, may be an act of wisdom, arising out of necessity, but they are bad ingredients when mixed together, and not suited to the temper of the times.

Ever, my dear Lord Bathurst, yours most truly and faithfully,

MALMESBURY.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

London, May 31, 1810.

A most desperate attempt was made this morning to assassinate the Duke of Cumberland. The following particulars are what I have been able to collect.

An Italian valet, who had lived in His Royal Highness's service for these last fourteen years, concealed himself last night in a closet in the Duke's bed-chamber, and at three o'clock this morning, after His Royal Highness was in bed, attempted to murder him. The villain aimed his blow at the Duke's throat, and slightly wounded him. His Royal Highness was awakened by the blow, and quitting his bed struggled for some time with the man, during which His Royal Highness received nine wounds, one (a bad one) on the forehead and several about the body and in the hand. The Duke succeeded at last in getting down-stairs and rousing the servants, who called the guard, during which time the villain went up stairs and cut his throat from ear to ear. I am just come from St. James'—the Duke is attended by Sir Henry Halford and Mr. Home.

The servant told me that His Royal Highness was not considered 'in any immediate danger,' but it is thought that two of his fingers must be amputated. Jealousy and revenge are both said to be the cause of this attempt on His Royal Highness's life, with what truth I am not able to say.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Medusa,' off Cape Machichaco, July 14, 1810.

This is the first opportunity I have had since I left Plymouth of telling you how we are going on here, and as the 'Cossack' is just sailing for England I will give you, by her, an account of a little expedition which has kept us all fully employed for the last three weeks. General Porlier (whom you must often have seen mentioned in the Spanish papers by the name of the Marquisito) was very eager to embark a Spanish regiment on board our squadron, and to attempt beating up the French posts along the coast between Gigon and St. Sebastian, partly as a sort of diversion and to prevent them from reinforcing Massena from the Asturias, and also with a view of destroying the batteries which protected all the small vessels coming from Bayonne to St. Andero with supplies for the enemy, which were forwarded by the high road from thence to Valladolid, &c.

Accordingly, we distributed 500 of the regiment of Cantabria on board the 'Arethusa,' 'Dryad,' 'Narcissus,' and 'Medusa,' and sailed for Santona, and on our passage got a battalion of seamen and marines into pretty good order, of which I was the Colonel. Alymer, of the 'Narcissus,' acting as second in command of the whole, with the temporary rank of Brigadier General, to put him on a footing with Porlier. On the 4th we disembarked near Santona; the French, who were there, did not think it prudent to face us, so that we only took a few prisoners of their rear-guard, who waited rather too long. The

Spaniards assured us they would have three or four thousand men in the town in two days, and if they would have come, we might have defended ourselves against any number the French could have brought to attack us; but the truth is that all these detached parties of Spanish troops resemble banditti more than anything else, and are under so little control that, as they did not like the idea of being in garrison at Santona, they amused us with excuses and assurances till the morning of the 7th, when we found that instead of reinforcements, we were likely to have a visit from the commandant of St. Andero with 700 men. We mustered about 800, and having got some carronades on shore early, and mounted them on a height which commanded the only approach to our position, we waited quietly for the appearance of the French, who arrived about eleven o'clock, driving in our advanced posts, and advancing very briskly in three columns, the strongest of which pushed on for our right, where the Spaniards were posted.

If we had had no guns I really believe our valiant friends would not have stood ten minutes, but as we directed our whole fire from the battery on the French who were making the attack on them, they maintained themselves boldly on a height close to the sea, till the enemy, after advancing within half musket-shot and finding his men begin to drop, thought it wisest to go to the right about, and retreat towards St. Andero, followed by our light troops; but we could not trust the sailors (who would have been running *helter skelter* after them) out of their position, and the Spaniards seemed to think they had had fighting enough. It

was really a pretty little action in miniature, and if the French had attacked boldly and the Spaniards would have stood, I think very few of the former would have returned to tell the story, as we had made our position so strong by throwing up breastworks, cutting the road, &c., that we never could have been forced by anything like an equal number.

The French own to have lost eighty men, which I suppose is below the truth. We had only seven wounded.

The next morning, finding that the enemy had halted only two leagues off, that Bonet was coming with troops from Cocedo, and that reinforcements were marching from Bilboa, and in short that we should be attacked by three or four thousand men in a day or two, and that on the other hand we had no chance of seeing a man of our allies, and with our actual force were not able to afford a second line or even a reserve, we determined to lose no time in embarking; which we very soon effected, carrying with us every man we landed, guns, ammunition, &c., and 150 recruits for Porlier's regiment.

We have since been employed destroying all the batteries on the coast, and have, I believe, completely demolished about 100 guns which used to molest our cruisers very much.

We have picked up about fifty or sixty prisoners, most of them gendarmerie, who grumble very much at being sent out of France. We are now returning to Ribadeo to disembark our troops; and so ends my story. The Spanish Generals keep up no sort of communication with each other. Porlier really knows less

than I do of what is going forward in Andalusia, Estremadura, &c.; and they tell all sorts of absurd lies about their successes. Nevertheless they all hate the French heartily; their men are wonderfully sober and patient of fatigue, but they are wretchedly clothed and worse armed, very few of them having a bayonet; this naturally tempts them to place too much confidence in their heels and too little in themselves or their officers, who are really most of them brave fellows. Adieu.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Falmouth, July 30, 1810.

I have just a moment to tell you that I have arrived here with the latest accounts from the army in Portugal, and that nothing of much consequence had taken place as late as the 19th. You probably knew Ciudad Rodrigo[1] surrendered on the 10th, and Massena's having remained quiet for a week after perhaps looks well.

The most important intelligence I bring is that of a sudden movement of Regniers with his whole force from Mesida towards the Tagus, of course with the intention of turning Lord Wellington's left; but as these intentions had been pretty well known for near three weeks before, I hope they may be more easily frustrated. General Leith was at Thomar with a corps destined to support General Hill, and to keep open the communication between him and Lord Wellington. An affair had taken place between two squadrons of

[1] Herrara, after a very gallant resistance, surrendered it to Massena. *Vide* Napier, vol. iii. p. 212.

the 16th Light Dragoons and eight of French cavalry, in which the latter were beaten with considerable loss. Colonel Talbot and eight men fell on our side. Our squadron at Corunna were embarking Spanish troops again to co-operate with General Mahy in the Asturias, where the French are understood to be much weakened by sickness and detachments. I sail again to-morrow, and hope to get back in time for our second expedition.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Medusa,' Corunna, October 5, 1810.

This is an anxious moment here from the situation of the two armies; when our last accounts came away, it appears impossible but that an engagement must have taken place before that time. Lord Wellington after having always given out and led everybody to believe that he intended to retreat by Guarda towards his first position, which extends from Abrantes by Thomar towards Leyria and the sea, suddenly retired by Viseu towards Coimbra, and took up a position between the Vouga and Mondego, having (I understand) both his flanks secured by inaccessible mountains, and his line extending from Mondego to Busaco. Massena was advancing as the British retreated, and was at Visen on the 22nd. Our advanced posts were at St. Combadon, and some smart affairs were supposed to have taken place, as much firing had been heard the day our express left the army. The Guarda road was said to be so well secured that nothing could get that way, and the French would be obliged to attack to a

great disadvantage. The army was in high spirits and everybody very sanguine. We expect further intelligence every moment; I will keep my letter open as long as possible, in hopes of having something good to add.

We have been very idle here since I returned from Falmouth. My time has been chiefly passed cruising off Cape Machichaco and preventing supplies passing by sea from Bayonne to Santander &c.; but I have seen nothing but one brig with some shells and shot on board, which will, I hope, certainly be condemned, but they are unluckily not very valuable articles. All the squadron are now here preparing for another expedition along the coast. We shall have about 700 Spanish troops under General Renavales, and Sir Home Popham is expected out with a regiment or two from England. If two or three thousand men in *troop-ships* (as you suggest) could have been spared in the summer, we should have harassed the French very much, and have done Lord Wellington more good than we have been able as it is. However, you will see by all the intercepted letters that they have been kept in *warmish* water.

I suppose the last packet we took will have been published before this time, it consists chiefly of dispatches from Bonet and Barthelemy, who describe their situation and difficulties in very strong terms. They have received no pay for ten months and the contributions (though rigorously levied) are perfectly inadequate to supply the wants of the army. They are very sickly, and complain heavily of the scarcity and badness of their medical staff &c. They are also on the worst

terms with each other, and their letters are full of accusations and recriminations.

Bonet commands in the Asturias, Barthelemy the province of Santander. They have about 14,000 men between them. Porlier surprised Ovieda about ten days ago, killed the French guard at the gate, and was very near taking Bonet, who hid himself in a stable in his shirt only, and the alarm being given the Spaniards were obliged to retreat. All the Biscayans profess the utmost eagerness for arms &c. We shall carry 20,000 stand with us and see what they will do.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Medusa,' Corunna, November 14, 1810.

Dear Fitzharris,—It is most likely that you see much later intelligence from Lord Wellington vîa Lisbon than I can send you from hence, however, knowing how anxious you must be at this critical moment, I write to tell you all I know on the subject. The engagement of October 27th[1] was not sufficiently decisive (although the French were repulsed with certainly a loss of 8,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners) to check their advance, and though they could not force the front of Lord Wellington's position, they would have turned his left if he had remained in it. Accordingly he crossed the Mondego on the 1st, repulsing the French in two attacks on his rear-guard that day, and the 3rd pursued his retreat on Leyria where the ground

[1] The victory of Busaco, gained over Massena and Ney, in which the French lost General Graindorge and 800 men killed, and Generals Foy and Merle and above 4,000 men wounded. The Allies lost 1,300. *Vide* Napier, vol. iii. p. 329.

becomes strong, and where I believe he means to take up a position. Massena followed him with his whole force, and the Portuguese militia under General Miller and Silviera and Colonel Trant immediately moved forward from the Douro to cut off his supplies and communications.

All the baggage, sick, wounded &c. of the French were left with a strong detachment at Coimbra; where Colonel Trant[1] surprised them on the 7th, and took the whole prisoners, amounting to 5,000, who were immediately sent off for Oporto. Nothing was known further respecting the armies. The enemy have no provisions except what they carry with them, and the country is exhausted and will furnish nothing, consequently they must either be victorious or starved in a few days. Innumerable reports of victories gained by Lord Wellington have come within the last two days to Corunna, but I fear they are premature. We are now under weigh and proceeding on our expedition with about 1,200 Spaniards, too small a force, I fear, to do anything.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, December 14, 1810.

Though I conclude the evening papers will all have the accounts of this unfortunate business at the Isle of France, yet as I have heard it from the *best authority* (viz. Robinson), I will tell you all I have been able to collect. Our squadron cruising off there, consisting of

[1] Colonel Trant commanded the Portuguese militia.—Napier, vol. iii. p. 347.

the 'Sirius,' 'Nereide,' 'Iphigenia,' and 'Magicienne,' fell in with the French ships 'Bellone,' 'Minerva' (ci-devant Portuguese), and 'Victor,' and chased them into a small bay protected by batteries, where unfortunately Captain Pym determined to attack them, and in doing so three of the ships ran on shore in such situations that after fighting I do not know how long, they were obliged to abandon and burn the 'Sirius' and 'Magicienne;' the 'Nereide,' which was still closer in, could not extricate herself, and struck her colours after losing 260 men, killed and wounded, out of 280; and the 'Iphigenia' in short was the only one which has escaped, and she is now blockaded (by some other French frigates which have joined the first squadron) in a small island which the crews of the two ships destroyed have taken possession of, and great fears are entertained that their provisions will not hold out till Admiral Bertie arrives to relieve them. In addition to this an East Indiaman, one of the expedition from the Cape of Good Hope, has been taken with General Wetherall on board, and 500 men. I suspect that the attack of the Island after all these misfortunes will be abandoned.

1811.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Spring Gardens, January 4, 1811.

THE BUSINESS that is to come on in the House of Commons to-night offers none of the least curious circumstances of the present eventful times. That two deputy clerks, whose salaries are not more than 150*l.* per annum each, should have had the power of stopping the issue of 1,500,000*l.* of the public money seems extraordinary, but so it is.

Mr. Perceval used every means to persuade them to put the Privy Seal to the warrant, and amongst other reasons endeavoured to prove to them, that as the King only *signed* but did not *write* the bill (for so I understand it is called) they might venture to do it without the sign manual. Their oath is *not* to put the Privy Seal to any bill which has *not* the sign manual. I believe Lord Westmorland[1] was not very sorry that they refused.

The bulletin is much the same. 'The King continues as well as he was yesterday.' No news from Portugal.

[1] He was Privy Seal.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Spring Gardens, January 28, 1811.

Lord Pembroke is a little better. Lord Palmerston, whom I met in the park, tells me that he learnt from Mr. Perceval that in the audience the Chancellor and himself had on Saturday, the King told the Chancellor that he discerned his features sufficiently to know him. All this is very good, and I am well disposed to believe it. The language of the Oppositionists is, however, very different, and if wholly unfounded, so perverse that, with every allowance for party feeling, I cannot reconcile it to myself how any set of men can be so profoundly malignant. Whitbread told a friend of mine to-day, in language borrowed from his brewhouse, that when the Chancellor and Mr. Perceval spoke to His Majesty on public affairs 'the King would not touch collar;' and Lord Grey said this morning in more gentlemanlike language that 'Ministers found His Majesty totally incapacitated for business.' If such should unfortunately be the fact, which I will not believe until I hear it from better authority, something must transpire on the subject in the course of to-night's debate.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Plymouth Dock, July 7, 1811.

To my great joy I am attached to the fleet under Lord Gambier, and sail to-morrow to join the 'Tonnant' off Brest.

I like this station even better than going to America

with Sir J. Yorke, because if he manages to frighten the Americans he must return, not re infectâ to be sure, but without the chance of a single capture.

The idea seems to be that the French are likely to push a squadron to that quarter if there is a chance of hostilities. Their ships in the western ports are all manned and ready for sea, and it is expected they will try to assemble at L'Orient, where they have already four sail of the line and one frigate. The name of the latter I cannot get, the others are the 'Eylau,' 'Wagram,' 'Wismar,' and 'Veteran;' at Brest is the 'Nestor' and three frigates; at Aix Roads the 'Regulus' and three more frigates, with one ready for sea at Nantes. If these could all get out they would form a strong squadron, and give Sir Joseph Yorke some amusement. The 'Spartan' sailed yesterday for Spithead, I believe, to join him; they are quite right in sending the large frigates on this service, as the 'President' would be an overmatch for such light ones as the 'Aquilon' and we ought not to begin with indecisive actions. The easterly winds prevent any arrivals from Portugal, which you may easily imagine everybody expects with tenfold anxiety, though I am sanguine in spite of the croakers. The 'Onyx' brought no news from Cadiz. Victor's force was supposed not to exceed 5,000 men; General Graham has about 3,000, but all the Spanish troops fit for service have been landed at Ayamonte and sent off to Blake and Ballasteros. We have also detached the 47th Regiment to Tarragona, which I am afraid is in considerable danger. The 9th Light Dragoons sailed under convoy of the 'Armida,' on the 4th inst., they have had a fair wind ever since,

and will probably make a quick passage. The men leave their horses and go on to Sicily, at least that was the arrangement when they left this place. The 4th Dragoons are ready to embark as soon as transports come for them.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens,[1] July 13, 1811.

I have just time to say that by the French accounts, Marmont was at Badajoz on the 21st ult. and Lord Wellington was retreating. Tarragona was captured by storm before the arrival of the 47th.[2] The French acknowledge to having lost 2,500 men in this business; they say they have only taken 150 prisoners, so that either the whole garrison were put to the sword or made their escape, I hope the latter.

In the meantime they have evacuated the whole of Gallicia, the Asturias, and a great part of Leon, and Santo Aldes was advancing and may perhaps do something.

They have, they say, sent an army to drive us into the sea, and they give a flaming account of the business we have already heard of near Almeida. Altogether, the accounts are not so pleasant. I wish our reinforcements were off. The 3rd Dragoons, 4th Dragoon Guards, 5th and 7th Dragoon Guards, are all marching down to the coast to embark. Le Marchant is to have this brigade.

[1] Captain Bowles was in England on sick leave of absence.

[2] Tarragona was stormed by Suchet on June 28. Five thousand Spaniards were put to the sword, and 9,000 prisoners made.—Napier, vol. iv. p. 97.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, July 18, 1811.

By the private letters from the army of the 27th ult., it appears that Soult has fallen back as far as Talavera de la Real, and there did not seem to be any probability of an action. We have lost another cavalry picket of 70 men, commanded by Captain Lutchens of the 11th Light Dragoons, which was cut off much in the same way as the one near Olivera. This will put you in a rage, but accidents will happen now and then. L—— is, I hear, blamed for this more than the officer commanding. I have seen a good many letters from the staff, in general they are sanguine, but complain much of want of cavalry, and I fear it must be some time before that want is supplied; and in the meantime we certainly do not appear to be taking the best means to preserve what we have. The King, I am sorry to say, is worse, and Heaven knows what may happen in that quarter. I fear the report of a victory in the Mediterranean is unfounded. This is, I think, all the news of the day.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, July 20, 1811.

At last we are to receive men from the Militia. The volunteering for the 1st regiment commences this day three weeks, and the first battalion will then join Lord Wellington. I suppose we shall be allowed to get a few men afterwards. This was always your idea, so you are bound in honour to support it.

Thank Heaven I have at last received orders for embarkation, and shall be off about this day week. One lieutenant-colonel and three ensigns go at the same time.

I hear of three companies going in our regiment immediately, I shall get mine in time.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Portsmouth, September 4, 1811.

After having been promised a week's notice of our departure, we were astonished on Sunday by orders to be in this town by Monday evening, as the fleet for Lisbon was expected to sail on the 3rd. This, as you may suppose, completely deranged all my plans of visiting Park Place and Wiltshire, where I had calculated on falling in with you. As it is, the convoy is now getting under weigh, and as none of my heavy baggage has arrived, I am under the necessity of staying behind. Fortunately, I have plenty of brothers in affliction, as we are all of us in the same situation. To say the truth, I am rather glad of it, as it has been the means of my getting a passage in the 'Menelaus,' which sails on Saturday, and the probability is, she will be at Lisbon before the convoy. We hear that Lord Wellington is determined to bring the French under Marmont to action if possible, or at all events to oblige them to concentrate their forces.

I fear we shall be too late for this part of the campaign, which I most sincerely regret. Detachments for the 11th, 14th, and 16th Light Dragoons are going out, which will render those regiments effective. Our

force in cavalry in the Peninsula must now be tolerably respectable.

We do not take out any men for the Guards, indeed, our brigade there does not stand in need of any; the two battalions muster nearly 1,700, *effective under arms.*

I believe the force under Lord Wellington at this moment is somewhere about 45,000, including Portuguese. He has besides this number, 13,000 *sick* and *convalescent* at Lisbon.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Plymouth Dock, September 20, 1811.

It is a long time since I have written, but the station of Brest furnishes many more opportunities for receiving than sending letters, and I might perhaps have kept silence *perforce* still longer, if want of water had not obliged us to come here for two or three days to replenish. Nothing now has taken place in that part of the world, since my last dispatch.

The French go on with their harbour exercise in the sort of way which Buonaparte seems to enjoin to all his naval forces at present, but this will only serve to make them *fine-weather* sailors, and they will be cruelly sea-sick the first gale of wind they get into. The Toulon squadron is the only one that appears really disposed to be daring, and I have great hopes that Admiral Emeriau's wonderful activity will get him into some serious scrape ere long, especially as Sir Edward Pellew lets him play his tricks without molestation, I suppose flattering himself he may at last be tempted out of reach of his hole.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Abrantes, October 9, 1811.

Though I cannot pretend to have much to retail, yet as I know that to you and all who think much of this part of the world, *anything* is interesting that comes from it, I shall give you what little intelligence I can. I reached Lisbon on the 23rd ult., so had no chance of seeing the finale of this campaign, which may now, I think, be considered as concluded. Lord Wellington's intention in taking up the position near Ciudal Rodrigo has completely answered, by obliging the enemy to collect, and thereby giving the Spaniards, who were very hard pressed, time to breathe.

We shall now, I suppose, occupy nearly the same line of cantonments originally taken up previous to the siege of Almeida, viz., Celerico, Guarda, Alfayates, &c. The Light division is, however, at present, pushed as far as Fuente Guinaldo. General Hill continues at Portalegre, and has from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and more troops are moving down towards him. Lord Wellington's head-quarters were, on the 4th, at Elbodon, but I imagine they will not continue there. The affairs[1] of the 25th and 27th of September exhibit his genius and coup d'œil in a most conspicuous point of view, as well as the steadiness and conduct of the troops engaged. I am sorry to say that the army is far from healthy, one consolation, however, is that very few die, and though they recover but slowly, still, they

[1] Of El Bodon and Aldea, in which Marmont was defeated, when attempting to relieve Ciudad Rodrigo.—Napier, vol. iv. p. 238.

do recover at last, and by the spring, many thousands will, I trust, rejoin their colours, and be perhaps better fitted for the next campaign than they were for the last. Some of the regiments which have been here from the beginning, are now returning to England. The remains of the 29th marched into this place yesterday, and proceed to-morrow on their route to Lisbon, to embark. They came out 900 strong, and have received about 300 since; out of this number they now muster about 200 on parade, and have the same number sick, the remainder they have buried.

The 85th and 97th are also on their road to Lisbon to embark. It is rather a melancholy sight, but these regiments have borne the brunt of most of the actions they have been engaged in. Beckford and myself, who are travelling together, continue our journey towards the army to-morrow, this being our first halting place since leaving Lisbon. Our route is by Castello Branco to Celerico, near which place we shall probably find our brigade, which is much the most healthy in the army, and musters nearly 1,600 effective.

The works here are improving, though, I think, but *slowly*, and there does not appear to have been much done since I was here last. It might certainly be made one of the strongest in the country, and indeed is at present capable of making a very good defence. The Portuguese seem really in earnest, and nothing can possibly exceed the cordiality with which one is received by every class of people, much more so than three years ago. They are drilling with great activity, and are rapidly becoming a genuine military nation, and if it were possible to pack up some few dozen of the old

nobility and send them to the Brazils, I have no doubt that in a short time Lord Wellington would be able to defend Portugal without the assistance of more than 10 or 12,000 British. This you will smile at, but I really think so. Most of the towns I have passed through on my road to Lisbon are fast recovering from the effects of French *fraternity*. I believe, however, that this recovery is confined to the towns on the Tagus, those on the Coimbra road will probably remain in ruins much longer. The necessaries of life (bread and vegetables) are to be had in most of the villages, and at no very unreasonable price, but nothing more. From every account I have seen or heard, nothing was so deplorably mismanaged as the late campaign in Estramadura, from the first affair at Campo Major to the battle of Albuera, both days inclusive.

One consolation is, that the same person will (probably) never have it in his power again to repeat his errors. A circumstance occurred soon after Albuera which diverted the army extremely. An English soldier who had been taken prisoner on that day, having contrived to make his escape, came to Lord Wellington to report his having been examined by Soult (Beresford being present). 'Well, what did the French General say to you, my lad? Sir, he only wanted to know if the English General who commanded the day of the battle, was hanged yet!' The want of cavalry officers *is*, and I fear *will be*, most sensibly felt. The 3rd Dragoons are in garrison here and appear a very fine body of men. The 5th Dragoon Guards are still at Lisbon, but were expecting to move speedily. We left the 7th Dragoon Guards waiting to

embark at Portsmouth. These three regiments are to be under Le Marchant, and will form a very fine brigade. General Vandeleur has an infantry brigade for the present. The cavalry did better in this last business. Alten's conduct is highly spoken of.

The Spaniards have been managing worse lately, and expending men without end or profit; they are, however, drilling with some activity at Cadiz and Majorca, and will probably by these means be able to do some good, but till they get rid of Blake very little can be hoped for.

I enclose a squib.

THE CITY OF LISBON AND CONVENTION OF CINTRA.

This is the city of Lisbon,
This is the gold that lay in the city of Lisbon,
These are the French, which took the gold, that lay, &c.
This is Sir Arthur (whose valour and skill
Began so well but ended so ill)
Who beat the French, who took the gold
That lay in the city of Lisbon.
This is Sir Hew, whom nobody knew,
Who made the convention, that nobody owns,
That saved old Junot's baggage and bones,
Altho' Sir Arthur (whose valour and skill,
Began so well but ended so ill)
Had beat the French, who took the gold,
That lay in the city of Lisbon.

These are the ships that conveyed the spoil,
That the French had plundered with so much toil,
Because Sir Hew, whom nobody knew,
Had made the convention that nobody owns,
That saved old Junot's baggage and bones,
Altho' Sir Arthur (whose valour and skill,
Began so well and ended so ill)
Had beat the French, who took the gold,
That lay in the city of Lisbon.

This is John Bull in great dismay,
At the sight of the ships that conveyed away,
The gold and the silver, and all the spoil,
That the French had plundered with so much toil,
Because Sir Hew, whom nobody knew,
Had made the convention that nobody owns,
That saved old Junot's baggage and bones,
Altho' Sir Arthur (whose valour and skill,
Began so well and ended so ill)
Had beat the French, who took the gold,
That lay in the city of Lisbon.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, BY CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Val des Ayres, November 3, 1811.

On the 11th September last we embarked on board the 'Kingston' (H.S.) at Portsmouth (having been at a masquerade at Lady H. Popham's till three o'clock in the morning) and sailed for Lisbon, which place we reached on the 22nd, after a passage which the mixture of passengers prevented from being *very pleasant.*

In the cabin, which was not *too* large, were besides ourselves (Sowerby, Talbot, Beckford, and Hornby) a German Hospital mate, who had been plundered a few weeks before, by the French Douaniers in Holland, and had not a shirt in his possession, an officer of the waggon-train, a veterinary surgeon of the 13th Dragoons, and a commissary—a *gentleman* who had been turned out of the British army, and was coming out as a candidate for the Portuguese service—the wife and daughter of a major in the waggon-train, and three or four officers of the line. The night previous to our reaching Lisbon, the 'gentleman candidate' and the waggoner thought proper to get extremely drunk, and after beating the commissary, offered very improper

solicitations to the ladies. They were in consequence put under arrest by the senior officers, but on making humble apologies, were forgiven the following morning. Lisbon is as dirty a place as can be. Trade appears to be extremely active. Horses and mules are both scarce and dear. Our time being almost entirely occupied in providing ourselves with these animals we had no opportunity to hunt for lions, which do not abound.

I lived at Lantours, and dined one day on board the 'Macedonian,' 38 guns, which is a beautiful new frigate commanded by Captain Carden. Late on the 30th we reach Sacavem, the weather was fine, and the road tolerably good. On the 1st of October we passed through the *lines* at Villa Franca, which are nearly unattackable *when* defended by 60,000 men. This place was Massena's head-quarters, and is very much destroyed. Great improvements are making in the works at Abrantes, which when completed will render this place extremely formidable.

We here met the remains of the gallant 29th Regiment,[1] 180 *strong* on their road to England. We reached Coria on the 17th, which is a very pleasant town, the country well cultivated, and the inhabitants particularly civil and hospitable.

Here I was unfortunately obliged to kill one of my mules, who had the glanders. Game is very plentiful. Beckford went out, but I was too unwell. The cazadores killed some hares and partridges. On the 21st we reached Guarda, in one of the most

[1] This regiment had borne the brunt of the fighting during the campaigns of 1809–10.

tremendous storms of thunder, lightning, hail and rain, I ever experienced; this is the highest *City* in Europe, situated on the ridge of the Sierra d'Estrella.

We rode on the 22nd to a fort about two miles from the town, which *was* being constructed by the Marquez de Lorna. The Portuguese believe he meant to imprison the Prince Regent in it—or *his own wife*. It certainly never could have been meant for any military purpose, but would be a very safe place for either of the above-mentioned uses.

On the 24th we reached this place, Val des Ayres, where we joined the regiment—it is a remarkably pleasant village, both country and weather beautiful. I pass my time very agreeably, riding, shooting, &c., and have killed a good many red-legged partridges, and a few hares, but unfortunately my *tackle* is very bad, and I have no dogs.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Val des Ayres, near Lagiosa, November 19, 1811.
Received December 6, 1811.

This place (which contains eight companies of the Coldstream) is situate about half way between Guarda and Celerico and in the most mountainous part of the Sierra d'Estrella; the weather is consequently much colder than one should expect to meet with in Portugal, and we have sharp frosts every night, and on the whole it is just what one would call seasonable for the same time of year in England. Partridges, rabbits, and some woodcocks are to be found.

Beckford and myself, who are living together, have been out shooting two or three times, and had we any

dogs might have done tolerably well, it is, however, genuine fagging and such as none but a keen sportsman would go through.

It will give you some idea of our hard work when I tell you that I have *each day* completely worn out a pair of pretty strong shoes. Hares are in abundance about a league from hence. General Graham, whose head-quarters are at Sagiosa, courses once or twice a week, and generally kills two or three brace a day. In fact hunting, shooting, coursing, and acting plays are the order of the day. At Fuente Guinaldo they have a regular pack of hounds, and have already knocked up about half the horses of the staff. Murray, the Quartermaster General, contrived to break his collar-bone in one of the many hard runs; he is, however, nearly well again. Lord Wellington rides so hard that I suppose he will meet with an accident of the same kind some day or other. By the mail which arrived yesterday, and by which we have received accounts from England, I see that you were all terribly humbugged as to the affairs of the 25th and 27th of September,[1] which, though highly creditable to both the Commander-in-Chief and the army, could not be well be called a victory. The business of Caçeres was certainly one of the neatest of the kind since Oporto, and I cannot help fancying to myself what you would have said in England had a British division been equally unfortunate as D'Aremburgh's at Arroyo de Molinos.

As it is I hope you will confess that we are now quits with the French for the cavalry pickets they have cut off.

Considering that this is a ruined country we contrive

[1] Combats of El Bodon and Aldea.

to manage *pretty well* in the *eating way*. Soup, fish, a joint of mutton and beef, hashes, tarts, custards &c., is the sort of dinner to which one generally sits down. The art of housekeeping is wonderfully improved during the last two years, and if I wanted to make a good housewife I should certainly send her to make a campaign in this country. In fact we want for nothing, and we not only teach the natives the art of *cooking* but of building; as we have actually added fireplaces and chimneys to most of the officers' quarters, together with some other *small necessary* additions which are seldom, or rather never, to be met with in Portugal.

After this account of our *comforts* you will not be surprised to hear that we are better than when I wrote last, and are, thank Heaven, *receiving from* instead of *adding to* the hospitals. Still, however, we are far from healthy, though in my next I trust I shall be able to give a more favourable report. As for myself I am growing fat, and shall (I hope) stand five or six years of *this sort* of life wonderfully well, for seriously speaking there seems at present every probability of the war here continuing that time; in fact one hardly knows what is to end it—we have no chance of driving the French out of Spain or they us out of Portugal, and under these circumstances what is to happen? It seems impossible that Buonaparte should continue to sacrifice annually 100,000 men in Spain, when the hopelessness of his obtaining anything like possession of the country must be very evident. Which side can hold out longest is another question, but I have no doubt that a much smaller army than we possess (at present) in this country would be sufficient for defensive purposes, to

which we must in all probability be obliged to confine ourselves. We are still in hopes of passing the winter, or at least the remainder of it, at Viseu, which is, they say, to be head-quarters, but I should not be surprised if everything remains in its present state. You will see by the map that the entire frontier of Portugal is at this moment defended by the allied army, and there appears to be no intention on the part of Marmont, notwithstanding his numerical superiority (which is as three to two), to disturb this arrangement. If the convalescents of our army recover in the way expected, I should hope that by the opening of the next campaign Lord Wellington would have nearly double the number of effectives that he has now. In cavalry his force must certainly be far more respectable than it has ever yet been, and if we could but get rid of a few old ladies at present at the head of this force, we might hope for some brilliant affairs.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Pinhel, December 5, 1811.
Received December 18, 1811.

As I know you will be curious to learn the result of our late sudden move, I have just time to say that the French having collected a considerable convoy for the supply of Ciudad Rodrigo, and about 14,000 men as an escort, Lord Wellington determined on obliging them either to give up this plan or to collect their whole army to support it. They appear to have very quietly preferred the former alternative, and we have consequently again gone into winter quarters, though the position of most of the divisions is

completely changed, but I believe that generally speaking *the army* occupy nearly the same cantonments as before. When at Nava d'Aver a few days ago I rode close up to Ciudad Rodrigo. The works appear in a very perfect state, and the garrison (in number about 3,000 infantry) are, I believe, in no want of provisions, though they desert pretty fast and complain bitterly. Almeida is again in a respectable state of defence, and will in a short time be much more so; about 2,000 men are daily employed there, and it appears to be Lord Wellington's intention to render it as strong as possible.

CAPTAIN BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Portsmouth, December 10, 1811.

The story of the 'Diana's' prize is this: Captain Ferris had taken a French brig and sent her for Plymouth, but on the passage three foreigners (two blacks and a Portuguese), whom he had put in as part of the crew (very unwisely in my opinion), persuaded two other rascals to join them, and at night murdered first the midshipman, then two others of the crew they were afraid of, confined the two that remained and made sail for France. Happily the 'Diana' and 'Aquilon' made their appearance when the vessel was in sight of Brest, and two out of the five murderers attempted to escape in the boat, leaving the others in the lurch like true villains. The two men who had been confined, watching an opportunity, rushed upon deck, threw one of their antagonists overboard (who was drowned, having on the midshipman's coat in which he had dressed him-

self, as he said, *to look fine when on shore*), secured the two others and brought out the brig to us, whilst the 'Diana,' who was nearest, chased and captured the boat. 'God's revenge against murder' was certainly never more completely proved, and I hope to hear to-morrow of the trial and condemnation of these wretches, who ought to be hung in chains within sight of our principal ports, for these occurrences are unhappily becoming too frequent.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Pinhel, December 23, 1811.
Received January 26, 1812.

From what quarter did you learn that I had been unwell? Probably from M——. Like his account of the want of medicines (which entre-nous I believe to be *totally* without foundation), you must receive all his news with considerable allowance for his being completely sick of the country and of course inclined to make the worst of everything. Nature certainly never meant him for a soldier. Thank Heaven I am now perfectly well, and shall, I hope, remain so long enough to assist in kicking the French across the Pyrenees. I have very little in the shape of intelligence to send you.

Everything remains pretty much in statu quo. We are working hard at Almeida.

About 2,000 men are still daily employed there. Fort Conception is rased, as it was voted to be of use only to the *besieging* army. We are making fascines and gabions at a great rate. A pontoon is completed. The spare ammunition is ordered up, and in short everything is (apparently) ready for the siege of Ciudad Rod-

rigo, but whether this is really in contemplation or only *humbug* to persuade the French to collect their army again I know not.

At all events nothing in the besieging way can possibly be attempted for some time, and probably ere that the enemy will have received reinforcements sufficient to enable him to resume the offensive. We are in the meantime certainly gaining ground on the hospitals, and so, I trust, shall continue to do. In the company I command there are only five sick, *absent* and *present*, out of 88 rank and file, but this is a particular case. The last accounts from Catalonia and Valentia are good, but we hear so many lies on that subject one is puzzled what to believe; if Blake can get into a scrape, he will.

The infatuation of the Spaniards in continuing to trust everything to that man is astonishing. Generals Cole and Murray are gone to England. The latter has been unwell for some time. They are to return by the beginning of March, before which time it is not probable anything will be done on either side. Marshal Beresford they say is also going home for a short time. Your account of the mildness of the winter in Hampshire is the more surprising as *here* we have had a continuation of very severe frost, and I never remember to have suffered more from the cold than during our late march to Nava d'Aver and to this place. Now, thanks to our carpenters and bricklayers, we are tolerably comfortable, and I am writing this by a blazing fire in as good a room as any reasonable man need desire.

There is a tolerable show of woodcocks, partridges, snipes, hares, and rabbits, round this place, as well as a

fair *sprinkling* of *wolves*, one of whom I was very near getting a shot at yesterday. These last-named gentlemen took a fancy to our oxen a few nights ago, destroyed five or six and dispersed the remainder. We generally have a grand coursing match once or twice a week; General *Graham* having some tolerable *greyhounds*. We are also expecting with considerable impatience some of the draft hounds from head-quarters' pack, which will conduce wonderfully to the amusement of those who have horses in condition to follow them, of which number I am not.

Lord Wellington had a bad cold a short time ago; he is now, however, quite recovered and hunts regularly.

My next will probably be from Almeida, to which place I am going on detachment in a few days. I shall then be better able to give you a correct account of what is doing there; till then adieu.

Lord Wellington got a tumble two days ago and hurt himself a little. He will certainly break his neck some day. The pontoon is sent on to El Bodon, and is, I believe, to be established there immediately. This is probably for the greater safety of some part of the light division which is across the Agueda. General Howard's brigade is again moved forward from Portalegre towards Merida.

1812.

On the 11th of May, 1812, Mr. Spencer Perceval, who had been Prime Minister since the Duke of Portland's resignation, was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons. He was succeeded by Lord Liverpool, formerly Lord Hawkesbury, who retained the post until 1828, when a paralytic seizure closed his career. On acceding to office he made Lord Castlereagh Foreign, Lord Bathurst Colonial, and Lord Sidmouth Home Secretaries respectively.

This was a year of great military glory for the British arms. Lord Wellington, quitting his lines of defence at Torres Vedras, advanced into Spain, took the fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz by storm, and closed a successful campaign by the decisive victory of Salamanca, and entered Madrid. These events will be found related in the following correspondence by Captain, now General, Sir George Bowles, who served with the army during the whole of this period until the end of the Peninsular war.

Lord Castlereagh succeeded Lord Wellesley as Foreign Secretary.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Almeida, January 1, 1812.

We left Val des Ayres on November 7 last, at an hour's notice, and by midnight reached Regiosa, having marched five leagues of most wretched road. On the 9th we had reached Nava d'Aver, weather extremely cold, and the place miserable, where we remained a week. On the 11th I rode through Espija and Carpio to within a short distance of Ciudad Rodrigo. We met two Italians who had just deserted from that garrison, but they could give us very little information. The works appeared to be in good repair, but are completely commanded within a few hundred yards on the north-west side. Four French Dragoons making their appearance, we set off in a most hearty fright, being only mounted on mules. The reason for our sudden move from Val des Ayres was Marmont's having collected a large convoy at Salamanca for the supply of Ciudad Rodrigo. Our assembling on the Agueda put a stop to that design, and only a very few mules were got in.

The escort, after remaining a week or ten days at Salamanca, and consuming what was intended for Rodrigo, returned to their former cantonments at Valladolid. On November 15 we reached Pinhel, which is a tolerable town. Near it are some old ruins, which are curious from their containing specimens of probably some of the first cannon ever used; two of them are of very large calibre, eight or nine inches, and are formed by strong bars of iron, placed horizontally, and bound

together by very stout iron hoops. The country about here is rocky in the extreme, and the roads generally are detestable. We passed our time very pleasantly. There is plenty of game; hares, partridges, woodcocks, &c., but having a miserable gun, shocking bad powder, and no dog, I made but a poor hand of it. The weather was rainy nearly the whole of the month, and I was not sorry to take my turn of duty at Almeida on December 27. This place, which is some two leagues from Pinhel, is pretty nearly destroyed as a *town*, but as a *fortress* would again require a battering train.

It was originally very strong, and would have stood a considerable time against Massena, had not the principal or rather, strange to say, *the only* magazine been blown up by a shell. It is situate on the wrong side of the Coa to be a real defence to this part of Portugal, as the difficulty of relieving or assisting it is very great when besieged by an army acting from the Spanish side; the bastion was blown up by the French when they evacuated it after the battle of Fuentes d' Onor, and another and a demi-lune by General Spencer for some purpose not easy to divine. About this time our battering train arrived here, a road having been *almost made* from Lamengo for that purpose. It consists of nearly seventy pieces; twenty-four and eighteen pounders, and ten-inch mortars, and is of course destined for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.

A pontoon has also been constructed by *Major Sturgeon*, and is to be thrown across the Agueda[1] near Gallegos.

[1] Colonel Sturgeon was a most distinguished engineer officer. He was killed in the combat of Vic Bigorre, March 16, 1840. Napier passes a high eulogium upon him, vol. vi. p. 614.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Las Narvas, January 7, 1812.
Received January 28, 1812.

I have just time to tell you that my speculations relative to the impossibility of our attempting immediate offensive operations against Ciudad Rodrigo turn out ill-founded. Everything is prepared, and we shall probably break ground against that town to-morrow, and if we are not disturbed I should think we may reasonably hope to obtain possession before the end of this month. The plan will (I believe) be to effect a breach in the least possible time and to storm instantly. The weather is bitterly cold, and we had two days ago a heavy fall of snow, which threatened to put a stop to our proceedings.

A cold rain has, however, melted most of it, and we (the Guards) march to-morrow to Carpio. Headquarters are at Galegos, about ten miles from Ciudad. The divisions employed in the siege will be the 1st, Grahams; 3rd, Picton's; 4th, Cole's; and Light, Crawford's.

The battering train will consist of about *forty twenty-four pounders*, and *six eighteens*.

The French garrison does not exceed 1,800 men, and are badly off for provisions. It will certainly be a fine beginning of the campaign of 1812 if we take it; but even if we should not, which can only be in consequence of Marmont's return, still it must operate as a great diversion in favour of Blake. You shall have a regular account of our proceedings, which will, I hope, prove more interesting than they have of late. The Coldstream will probably be at Carpio, which is a small village about four miles from Ciudad.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Espija, January 14, 1812.
Received February 1.

I am too much fagged to write a long letter, but at this interesting moment you would, I am sure, rather receive ten lines than nothing. I am just returned from the trenches, where the Coldstream have been during the last twenty-four hours working as hard as mortal men could work, under as heavy a fire as need be. What do you think of a thirty-six hours' bivouac with four degrees of frost? This has been our fate, and indeed that of all the divisions employed. It is more severe in imagination than in reality. We are going on well. The capture of the fort (an outwork) on the first night was of most essential service to us. Last night we stormed a convent almost on the glacis, which was carried easily. Unfortunately the greater part of the French picket made their escape (fifty men). Our batteries are nearly ready, and we shall certainly open with twenty pieces of twenty-four pounder calibre to-morrow morning. We (the Guards) have been uncommonly fortunate.

Last night we commenced an approach for our breaching batteries, which we carried to within half musket-shot of the town with the loss of only four men wounded. It was almost miraculous; the loss up to this morning has been very trifling, considering the hazardous service we are engaged in. The garrison made their first attempt at anything like a sortie about ten o'clock to-day. It did them neither credit nor service. If we go on prosperously we shall *storm* in about a week.

It is, however, certain that both Marmont and D'Orsenne are making every effort to collect a force large enough to force us to raise the siege. Lord Wellington will not, however, be bullied, and I predict a general action before many days are elapsed; I should think about the 23rd. Even if we should be obliged to give up the attack of this place, a great object will be gained. The Asturias must be again evacuated, and if the conquest of Valentia is not completed it may be retarded, if not prevented; this is supposing the worst: but if, on the other hand, we should take Ciudad or beat Marmont in a general action, the advantages would be invaluable.

P.S.—Nine o'clock A.M. January 15. Our batteries have opened and are blazing away manfully.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Espija, January 15, 1812.

The accounts from *this* part of the world are now beginning to assume an interesting appearance, and the events of the next fortnight will probably determine whether we are to act this year on the offensive, or resume our former positions. The siege of Ciudad Rodrigo will form an epoch in the history of this war. It has, I believe, very rarely happened that trenches have been opened in such severe weather.

We are, however, going on very prosperously, and our loss in killed and wounded has been almost miraculously small. We are particularly fortunate in the

surprise and capture of the only outwork belonging to the town on the first night, which advanced us at least four days. We also carried a convent by storm the night before last, and the garrison must now keep within their walls. Our batteries opened this morning, and are now keeping up an incessant fire, under cover of which our breaching batteries are erecting, and if Marmont does not arrive before the 24th he will, I hope, be too late to prevent the fall of the place. He promises, however, to be here before that time, and is, they say, using every exertion to this effect.

Lord Wellington will not retreat from an equal force, and has ordered the cavalry and horse artillery to the front, and concentrated nearly the whole army within a few miles of this place. Neither party seems inclined to be bullied, and under these circumstances I am inclined to think a general action extremely probable. For my own part I have such implicit confidence in Lord Wellington that I entertain no fear of the result of his calculations. There never was (apparently) a moment in which a decisive advantage on our part would be of such fatal consequences to the enemy. At all events the attack of this place must prove a diversion of the utmost importance to the south of Spain, and should the conquest of Valentia be not already completed, it may be retarded if not prevented.

It is extremely unfortunate that the state of affairs in Ireland should require so large a portion of our force to be kept there which might turn the scale here. We are still far from healthy, though certainly better than three months ago. The weather, though severely cold, is infinitely more favourable than we had any

reason o expect, and if it continues as fine as the last two days will be of the utmost importance.

Rain or snow would alone oblige us to raise the siege. If we beat Marmont in a general action, there is nothing to prevent our being at *Madrid* this day month. The Catalonians are doing wonders; certainly there never existed a people who more deserved to be free than the inhabitants of that province. If all Spain acted in the same manner, there would not be a Frenchman alive in the Peninsula this day six months.

We are all looking with considerable impatience to see what the Prince Regent's first steps will be after the restrictions upon him are taken off. I trust no change will take place. Any decisive successes on our parts would, perhaps, contribute as much as anything to prevent any material alteration, at least, as to measures of the M. G.

I trust in my next I may be able to communicate something of importance.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Espija, January 20, 1812.
Received February 20.

Though you will receive a far better account of our proceedings from the 'Gazette' than I can pretend to give, yet I cannot deny myself the pleasure of congratulating you on the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo.

This enterprise has been a *chef d'œuvre*, and one hardly knows whether to bestow most praise on the planner or the executors of it. I am just returned from the scene of action, which is, as you may imagine, sufficiently horrible, and my head is in a

tolerable state of confusion. From the intercepted letters to General Barrie (the Governor) it appears that the French calculated on holding out more than double the time they have done. Indeed, when one reflects that the Spaniards defended the town twenty-five days, it seems rather astonishing that it should only have taken us eleven. But this must be imputed to the rapidity with which our works were executed, and the excellence both of our battering train and those who served the guns. In short, from the commander-in-chief down to the drummer, I believe every one has done his duty. Considering the nature of the service, I do not think our loss greater than might be expected.

Poor General McKinnon was blown up by the explosion of a mine or magazine, it is uncertain which. His loss to his family is most severe. General Crawford is not expected to recover. Marmont will, I suppose, be rather astonished. He intended to be here on the 29th, and I hope he may persist in this resolution, we shall be quite ready for him by that time; one week will render the place quite safe for a *coup de main.*

What excuse he will be able to make to his august Majesty the Emperor and King I know not. Poor Barrie will not, I suppose, be spared, though no possible blame can attach to him, except that of not having surrendered sooner.

In the meantime the news from Valentia, if true, completely overbalances our successes here. The report is, that Blake with 2,000 men has made his escape, but that the remainder of his army and the city are taken. I heartily wish the former part of the story

may not be true. Nothing could happen more favourable for the Spaniards than their getting rid of that man, who will lose every army intrusted to his command, and whose arrogance and presumption is only equalled by his folly. The present idea is, that as soon as Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida are secure, which will take about a month or six weeks, another siege will be undertaken, and this, I believe, will most undoubtedly be Badajoz.

We cannot, however, reckon on being able to attack that by surprise as we have this, and a general action must be fought to see *who is the strongest* before we can hope to succeed there.

In the meantime, I hope the good people of England will be contented with the manner in which the campaign of 1812 has been opened, and not fancy we are revelling in all the luxury of winter quarters. A thirty-six hours' bivouac twice a week in severe frost and snow is not very effeminate, more especially when the quarters to which we have to return are what my present one is, viz.—a stable (out of which I turned the donkey belonging to the inhabitants of the house) with a hole in the (*roof* you cannot call it) *top* to let the smoke out. Joking apart, I must do the men the justice to say they have borne every privation, and worked as hard as possible, with the most perfect good humour, and I have no doubt that Lord Wellington will do them ample justice.

If this report from Valentia be *not* true (which, however, I much fear there is little chance of) this campaign will probably be a very disastrous one for the French, who have never yet had so few men to spare;

and if the Prussians preserve anything like a menacing position, I should think no very material reinforcements are likely to arrive from France. You will be sorry to hear that no less than *twenty English deserters* were in Ciudad when we attacked it; *more than one* of them were killed *defending the breach!!* About eleven or twelve are now in our possession, and will, of course, suffer the punishment they so well deserve. The French calculated on the fort we stormed the first night delaying us *nine days*—unfortunately for them it did not take us *so many minutes*. Had the breach been practicable twenty-four hours sooner, we (Coldstreams) should have had the storm. After all, perhaps, everything is best as it is. Our battering train is returning to Almeida, to which place, of course, much has not been done during the last fortnight; but every exertion will now be made to place it in a respectable state of defence, indeed, at present it would require heavier guns than are ever used in the field to make any impression on the works.

I should not be very much surprised if Marmont, indignant at being outwitted, was to try the issue of a general action, in which I flatter myself he would get as complete a drubbing as ever fell to the share of man. Hill was to be at Castello Branco to-day, and if Marmont should persist in advancing, will of course join us. Our force would then be highly respectable, and probably fully equal, if not superior, to anything the enemy could collect, and under the circumstances the result would not be very doubtful. The weather though bitterly cold is beautiful, and hitherto we have not materially suffered.

The worst part of our misery is the seeing our horses and mules actually dying of starvation; no forage can be procured, and till the rainy season sets in they must eat flint stones. The cavalry are in tolerable condition, and if Hill joins we shall muster nearly 4,000 *effective* of that arm, which is double the number we have ever yet shown in any general action.

January 22.

Nothing new. The battering-train is gone back to Almeida, and every exertion making to level *our* works and repair the breach, which will soon be done. The siege of Badajoz is certainly thought of.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Espija, January 29, 1812.

Since my last we have been very busily engaged in restoring Ciudad Rodrigo to a respectable state of defence. This is now, thank Heaven, done, and the French may make their appearance as soon as they like. We have accounts from Valentia as late as the 5th of this month, at which time hopes were still entertained that Suchet would be obliged to raise the siege.

I own I am not sanguine on this head. Marmont does not seem inclined to trouble us.

The siege of Badajoz is, I believe, determined on. I hope we shall make a better business of it than last year. We shall probably move to the southward in a few days.

CAPTAIN W. BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

'Aquilon,' Yarmouth Roads, February 19, 1812.

It is some comfort (as times go) to find myself still afloat, instead of being on my march to Verdun, but I confess I am very much inclined to agree with your criticisms on *our* abilities, and really believe that most of our late losses might have been avoided by proper precautions. The 'Hero,' 'Pomone,' 'Laurel,' 'Manilla,' and 'Grasshopper,' certainly perished by running at night, or in thick weather; of the 'Saldana' we know too little to decide, and in my private opinion the 'St. George' ought to have been left at Gottenburg for the winter, or even destroyed, in preference to venturing her in the North Sea at such a late period of the year; the 'Defence' has fallen a sacrifice to a point of honour which perhaps, poor Atkins, under all the circumstances of the case, may be thought to have carried rather too far. From what I have been able to observe the dangers are not great on this station, if you are allowed to use your own judgment and take care of yourself; but if in addition to the fear of the Hook Sand &c., we are to dread courts martial for not keeping close in, it is placing us most terribly between Scylla and Charybdis. What you say about pilots is perfectly true: I never trust them except on occasions where, from their local knowledge and my own want of experience, it is absolutely necessary; that is to say in entering harbours &c. of which I know nothing, but in the North Sea, or indeed in any place that I have been at all accustomed to, I keep a very sharp look-out upon

them. Of all the unaccountable losses that have occurred, the loss of the 'Manilla' is the most extraordinary, as I had ordered her to Yarmouth three days previous to her catastrophe, and imagined she had got safe in before the gale of the 28th., instead of which they ventured in thick weather to make a stretch over to the Dutch coast (probably with the hope of fetching Yarmouth in the morning), and were lost, as you will have seen by the French papers. This, from happening almost under my own eye, has shocked me a good deal.

I have come here for a week to refresh my people, a month's cruise off the Texel *knocks them up* more than five times that period to the westward.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Abrantes, February 26, 1812.
Received March 26.

You will see by the date of this that we have shifted our berths very considerably since my last. We left Espija about the 8th inst. and have been here nearly a week, the principal reason for our moving so far to the westward was to receive our new clothing, and that being now done we shall, I suppose, move very speedily towards the scene of action, viz. Badajoz, for the attack of which every preparation is (apparently) making. The howitzers belonging to the battering train employed at Rodrigo are already at Portalegre on their way to Elvas, and a train of 24-pounders is expected up from Lisbon immediately. With the exception of the 5th division, commanded by Leith, the whole of the army will probably be assembled in the vicinity of

Badajoz in a short time. What it may amount to when so assembled, I have very few means of judging, but I should imagine about 40,000. Some reinforcements may of course be looked for, though I fear not to any great amount. With 60,000 effective infantry and 6,000 British cavalry we should, if not too long occupied by Badajoz, have, I think, a fair prospect of raising the siege of Cadiz and perchance of seeing Madrid before the end of the year.

I cannot say that I am much grieved at the capture of Valentia, the loss of Blake makes amends for a good deal, and it is not a bad thing for the French to make themselves known.

The more they are dispersed, the faster they will moulder away.

The desertion from their army is enormous, and is not confined to the privates. The day before we left Espija I saw three *native* French captains who had deserted from Salamanca; they say that the misery of the life led by them and all the army was past enduring, and that, moreover, they had not been paid for sixteen months.

I heard the other day from good authority that 6,000 deserters have been sent into Gibraltar from Alicante alone during the last four months. This state of things cannot last much longer. If the South Americans send a few dollars to Cadiz the new regency may do *something*, but without money *nothing*. We are gaining ground on the hospitals very tolerably fast, and I imagine the number of non-effectives does not now bear any very unreasonable proportion to the effectives. Head-quarters will probably remain at Trenada till

everything is prepared for active operations here. General Graham comes to this place to-day. Evora is talked of as our cantonments when we quit this. If our draft arrives this brigade will march nearly 2,000 strong, and in good order. Promotion goes on very fairly, and this campaign will perchance sicken a good many.

Lord Wellington's *spirit* is visible here; the fortifications are going on rapidly, and in six months it will be the strongest place in Portugal, it is certainly one of the most important.

Ciudad Rodrigo will, in a short time, be infinitely more defensible than when we attacked it, three new outworks are constructing which will materially strengthen it. The lines on the left bank of the Tagus are completed and equally formidable with those on the right bank. In short, the conquest of Portugal by the French is becoming daily more and more difficult, and if we can but find men and money for two or three more campaigns, I really think we must succeed in expelling the French from the Peninsula.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Abrantes, March 3, 1812.

On January 3 we were ordered back to *Pinhel* to join our regiment, and on the 4th we marched to Las Narvas by a wretched road, raining and blowing furiously all day. I got soaked to the skin: a most severe frost set in the next day, accompanied with a little snow. I rode over to Almeida for the purpose of supplying myself with flannels, worsted socks, not forgetting brandy &c., to be prepared for the siege of Rodrigo.

On the 8th we marched to Espija, which was a shade better than Las Narvas (being Spanish). I turned out of a hovel a wretched donkey belonging to the people of the house, and *Beckford* and myself took possession of his berth. We made a hole in the roof, and organized a *fire*, to our *great delight*.

On the 9th we forded the Azara and Agueda in our way to relieve the Light division in the trenches, the latter river nearly up to our middle, and the frost very severe.

We went into the trenches about four o'clock P.M., men working famously till six o'clock the next morning, when we were relieved by the 4th division, who had completed the first parallel, but I was not sure whether my toes were off or on. There were plenty of shells flying about, and uncommonly well thrown. We (the Coldstream) had 5 men killed and 12 wounded. Next day a bridge having been constructed over the Azara, we had only to ford the Agueda: the frost was not quite so severe, but it was bitterly cold in the trenches. The Royal German Legion took the convent near the river by storm, without loss. Our men working very hard in the trenches. On the 15th I rode with Beckford to the heights on the scarped side of the Agueda to see our batteries open, but it was so foggy that we could not see much till about three o'clock, when the *coup d'œil was superb*.

On the 18th at eight o'clock, I was in an advanced battery, which opened at ten; it was rather a warm berth. Two out of seven of our guns were dismounted, and 15 or 16 men either killed or wounded in half an hour. I got off with a slight bruise on my shoulder from a

splinter. I went up to the top of the convent in the suburbs (just taken) with General McKinnon, from whence one might almost have thrown a stone into the town. The French were extremely civil, and let anybody walk down the road to the convent without firing. Our new battery effected a second breach near the principal one in the shoulder of the bastion this afternoon, and both were stormed on the night of the 19th, by the Light and 3rd division. The principal breach was well defended until the smaller one was carried, when, being *flanked*, the French *ran*. Two *deserters* from the 35th were killed on the breach!

Poor General McKinnon, after behaving most gallantly, was blown up by the accidental explosion of an expense magazine. General Crawford mortally wounded. Unluckily our men gave quarter, *ergo*, we shall always have *to storm*.[1] At daybreak the next morning, I rode over to see the garrison march *out*, and our men march *in* to the tune of 'the British Grenadiers.' We had about 1,600 prisoners. Our total loss during the siege was 1,003.

The place was a very good specimen of a *storm*, and presented as many horrible spectacles as can well be imagined, dead, dying, wounded, blown up, and drunken men in every corner, and a dozen of the best houses in the town in flames, and falling in in every direction. The peasantry, who were flocking in in numbers, appeared to enjoy the sight extremely, particularly the *women*.

One of the Spanish women belonging to Don Julian's

[1] This opinion was fully verified in the subsequent campaigns.

corps was very remarkable both for her beauty and her dress, which was a sort of uniform with epaulettes, and a sabre and sash, the latter thrown over one shoulder. She was attended by two orderlies, and examined *everything* with great attention. This place, which we took in eleven days, took Massena twenty-five to reduce.

On February 12, we marched back to Coria, where our old landlord was delighted to see us, and gave us some excellent wine, and, what was much more valuable, two measures of Indian corn. Our animals being nearly starved, owing to the want of forage. On the 13th we marched through the Pass of Fundas, where a severe action took place last year between Colonel Grant's corps of peasantry and some French corps, in which the latter lost upwards of 1,000 men.

Our animals began to recover in proportion as we got southward, the green forage being in tolerable abundance. The difference between Espija and Alpadunha in point of climate is astonishing; though only fifteen leagues southward everything is above a month in advance. On February 20 we reached this place, Abrantes. The works here are getting on, and will, when finished, render the place as strong as it is *important*.

It is only attackable from the southward, and then the possession of both sides of the Tagus is indispensable.

It will require a garrison of from 3 to 5,000 men, exclusive of artillery.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

La Para, a small village between Santa Marta and Zafra, March 18, 1812.
Received April 15.

I have just three minutes to thank you for yours of January 30, and February 19, and to say that the siege of Badajoz commenced the day before yesterday.

General Hill has moved with the 2nd, 5th, and Hamilton's divisions on Maida, which town is, I believe, his head-quarters at present. General Graham has moved on with the 1st, 6th, and 7th divisions to attack Drouet, who however does not seem inclined to wait for us. We drove in his advanced posts yesterday, and if he chooses to wait for us at Zafra, we will give him a licking to-morrow. Lord Wellington, with the 3rd, 4th, and Light divisions, remains at Elvas (rather close to Badajoz) to carry on the siege. I think we have a fine game before us, and though everything must necessarily depend on the issue of the *general action* which must ere long take place, I should not be surprised to see the siege of Cadiz raised by the end of next month and the south of the Santa Morena pretty well cleared.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Fuente del Maestro, March 23, 1812.
Received April 25.

I find that a long letter of mine of January 21 or 22, containing a full and true account of all the business at Ciudad Rodrigo, has never reached you, but as that has now become quite a threadbare subject, I shall say no more about it. I beg leave to set you right about the

Guards not being employed in the storming party. The fact was when the breach was reported practicable Lord Wellington determined that the division *working* and the one coming on should be employed, and it was therefore a mere chance.

This time, however, we are in front, and have therefore our full chance of honour and glory. You will probably receive much later intelligence from the present scene of action by the papers than any I can give; I will, however, journalize a little, as to you I know even our *past* operations are interesting.

We remained at Abrantes till the 3rd instant, and then moved to Fronteira (which with a few others near it is one of the most beautiful towns in point of cleanliness in the world). There we remained a week and then broke up suddenly for Elvas, near which place the whole army, with the exception of the 5th division, which was marching from Castello Branco, bivouacked on the 15th. The 1st, 6th, and 7th divisions, and two brigades of cavalry under Sir J. Graham, and the 2nd and General Hamilton's divisions and two brigades of cavalry under Hill, moved forward the next day, the former on Zafra and the latter on Maida. We (Graham's) bivouacked near Valverde on the 16th and drove Drouet's advanced posts from Santa Marta on the 17th, and were rather in hopes that he would wait for us in the neighbourhood of Zafra or Villafranca.

This, however, he wisely declined doing, and we arrived at the former of those towns on the 19th, without seeing anything more of the enemy, but in time to postpone a very gay ball which was to have been given at Llazena that night in honour of Joseph

Buonaparte and to which I rather believe (in spite of their *patriotism*) a considerable number of the *belles* meant to have gone. As long as *women dance* I believe they don't much care with whom. We remained at Zafra two days and then gave up our quarters there to the cavalry and horse artillery and came to this place.

We formed a junction on the 20th with General Hill's corps, and the whole are now under Graham, and would I suppose muster towards 30,000 effective. I believe that in my letter from La Pera I told you that the 5th division was with Hill; this turns out not to be the case, as I think the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and Light divisions are all employed in the trenches. The covering army occupies a line of cantonments extending from Zafra to Merida, and these will probably wait till some decisive movement takes place on the part of the enemy. Report says that Marmont has collected 35,000 men at Talavera de la Reina, but that they are badly off in point of provisions, which is extremely likely. Soult has about 12,000 disposable troops, and altogether they will probably with every exertion not be able to collect much above 50,000. This number we can manage, and if they get anything of a decisive drubbing we shall make a glorious campaign. If we had 10,000 more infantry there would not be a Frenchman south of the Sierra Morena this day six weeks. I believe that everything goes on at Badajoz as well as can be expected considering the state of the weather. It rains almost incessantly and has done so ever since the commencement of the siege. This will naturally retard our operations very considerably. We could not, however, have hoped to gain the town without a battle, and if

we are now victorious it will not make any material difference whether we are a week sooner or later; and the bad weather will, moreover, affect the enemy, and more particularly their transport of provisions, very materially.

The new Regency are going on well; if they receive any tolerable remittances from South America, may do much, but this I fear is hardly to be expected. The French talk of a Russian war, they would, I conceive, be too happy at any event which would give them a chance of getting out of this country. I fear there is but little hope of a diversion from that quarter, Buonaparte knows full well that he cannot keep up his armies here and carry on operations in Poland at the same time, and the Emperor Alexander cannot be very anxious to commence hostilities till he has finally smashed the Turks, who, by the bye, seem to have 'as many lives as a cat.' The inhabitants of this part of Estramadura seem to hate the French most cordially, and are all extremely anxious to have British officers to command the Spanish troops; this is a sentiment which is becoming more and more general every day, and will I suppose in the end occasion some experiment of the kind to be tried. I have no doubt of its success, though I do not see how it could be followed up, as in Portugal. This is undoubtedly the most interesting period which has occurred since the battle of Talavera, and will go a good way towards deciding the fate of the Peninsula, at least for some time.

I cannot say that the Government (in England) seems a very strong one. The Catholic Question is a sad stumbling block. It will be carried some day or other.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Albuera, April 7, 1812.
Received April 25.

I have just time to congratulate you on the capture of Badajoz, which fell after a most desperate struggle last night. The 'Gazette' will inform you much more fully on this subject than I can possibly do. Determined valour and good luck will sometimes succeed when the chances are against it, and I rather suspect that in this case the observation is pretty much in point. One thing appears certain, the breaches were *not* practicable, and the consequence has been very serious loss on our part. The most extraordinary part of the story is, that the French have not lost more than 150 or 200 men in last night's business. Lord Wellington was extremely anxious that as *few prisoners* should be made as possible, but our men could by no means be induced to do anything but *plunder* the instant the affair was decided.

This is really a most serious evil, and the inevitable consequence must be that we shall never take a place *but by storm*. The list of killed and wounded must be nearly large enough to satisfy John Bull. Marmont has invested Ciudad Rodrigo, he has, however, no guns of sufficient calibre to do much, and I suppose a force will be detached immediately in that direction. Soult has made a show of advancing, but this is mere humbug, he neither can nor dare attempt anything serious. We have been most abominably harassed since my last (from Fuente del Maestro) by old Graham, from his wonderful anxiety to *do something*.

He attempted on the 21st to surprise a French corps of 2,000 men at Llazena, and made a forced march of nine good leagues in twenty-four hours for this purpose. The plan was badly laid and worse executed, ergo, it failed in toto. He next attempted with one regiment to surprise a corps of 4,000. Luckily they took the said regiment for the advanced guard of the whole army and retreated!!

You will probably see by the 'Gazette' that every art of fortification was put in practice to render the storming impossible. The waters of a small spring were collected and dammed up to the height of five or six feet in front of the breach, or rather in the ditch, and a cheveaux de frise of *double-edged* swords was firmly planted on the parapet, in fine, nothing but the success of the escalade could have prevented our being repulsed.

What our next operations will be I cannot pretend to conjecture. Some force must be detached to Ciudad Rodrigo, and I do not suppose that the remainder will be able to carry on offensive operations in this quarter. We must, however, do something, or I fancy we shall again be abused for inactivity. I fear that without some pretty strong reinforcements (of which there does not appear to be much hope) we shall not be able to raise the siege of Cadiz this year. 10,000 more British infantry might do much, we have too many Germans and French at present. Some of the 7th division, which is entirely composed of these gentry, have taken it into their heads to change masters, and I do not think they are much to be trusted.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Portalegre, April 16, 1812.
Received May 12.

The 1st, 6th, and 7th, are this instant arrived here, and we shall proceed to-morrow in the direction of Villa Velha. The 3rd, 4th, 5th, and Light divisions are in advance, and I suppose will cross the Tagus to-morrow or the day after, at furthest. Hill remains with his old corps, and a considerable body of cavalry in the neighbourhood of Badajoz. Head-quarters are to-day at Niza. I cannot give you any very accurate information as to our numbers, but I believe that the seven divisions now marching north may amount to somewhere about 25,000 effective infantry.

The French are still investing Ciudad Rodrigo, but their heavy artillery has not come up, and we shall be in time to take it if it does. They had pushed their cavalry as far as Villa Velha, more with a view of marauding than anything else; they have now again retired. We are all in good health and spirits, and will drub them soundly if they will wait for us, which, however, is not likely.

Marmont has, they say, about 20 or 25,000. Soult can do nothing, and altogether we may hope to make a good campaign, but not without some reinforcements.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Near Albuera, April 20, 1812.

We left Abrantes on March 3, and got on to Alto de Chao on the 5th, a most delightful place,

abounding with quails, so, although tolerably tired after the march, I went out and bagged *three*. We reached Fronteira on the 7th, which is, without exception, the best and most comfortable *village* I ever saw in *any* part of the world. I passed a week there very pleasantly, as there was tolerably good shooting, hares, partridges, and abundance of quails, and sometimes wolves. I was out shooting when the order came to march. We did not get to Monforte till dark. On the 15th the whole army bivouacked near Elvas in *Spain*. Everything was got ready for the siege of Badajoz, which the engineers think will not hold out more than three weeks. I heard that the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and Light divisions were to have the honour of the siege, and the 1st, 2nd, 6th, and 7th divisions, with Colonel Hamilton's Portuguese, were to form the covering army. On the 20th we got to Zafra, which is an excellent town, the Spaniards were uncommonly civil, and the women extremely pretty, infinitely more so than the Portuguese. The French had fortified a convent on one side of the town very beautifully, and used to retire into it every night, giving a very good proof of *their* opinion of the inhabitants.

On the 25th we started from Fuente del Maestro, (which is a very good town, and where we stayed three days) to endeavour to cut off a French corps of about 2,000 men at Llerena, nine leagues distant. We arrived at Bienvenida, which is eight miles from Llerena about midnight, at which time we knew the enemy had received no information of our advance. Our force amounted to upwards of 10,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, two troops of horse artillery, and eighteen

pieces of foot artillery. The infantry were formed into three columns, the cavalry on the flank. We were ordered *to load* and then moved on *parallel*, and close to each other! The consequence was that falling in with a small advanced picket of the enemy, the head of our columns commenced firing, and the enemy being alarmed, marched off in quick time.

Had the most common and evident precautions been taken to cut off their retreat, the whole must have fallen into our hands. Llerena is a fine old town, and the cathedral a very remarkable one. The country between Fuente del Maestro, and this place well cultivated. I saw numbers of bustards, and hares in profusion, several of which were caught by our men.

On April 5, after some most fatiguing marches, we arrived at our position near Albuera. The ground appeared strong, but the quantity of wood in front, towards Santa Marta, was a very serious disadvantage, as it would enable the enemy to form his columns of attack within a mile of our position without being seen, and afford good opportunity for a surprise.

The number of hares about this part was really astonishing. On the 6th, we heard the storming of Badajoz very distinctly, though about ten leagues off, the firing of musketry uncommonly heavy, it commenced about eight o'clock in the evening and was not over till three o'clock the next morning. Our loss there was very severe, nearly 5,000 men *hors de combat.* After the place was surrendered, all discipline ceased, and it was plundered *à la Française*, or rather *à la Turque.* A British officer was shot by one of his own men, whom

he had endeavoured to prevent ill-using an *old* woman, nearly a dozen *females* were actually murdered, or died of ill usage! On the 9th, a gallows was erected in the great square, and after two or three men had been suspended the place became more quiet. On the 13th I went all over Badajoz, which was still in a most horrible state, the breaches were in the same condition as when attempted to be stormed on the night of the 6th, the *chevaux de frise*, made of sharp sword blades, and firmly fixed at the top, appeared to be serious obstacles. The citadel was not well defended, and was better attacked by Picton.[1]

His arrangements were remarkably good. All the other columns (excepting General Walker's) failed entirely.

I sat for an hour with poor Nicholas,[2] who was then sensible, and fancied himself out of danger, his conduct was gallant in the extreme; poor fellow, he died the next morning. It rained, or rather poured so violently the whole day, that I was unable to go over *our own works*, which I very much regretted.

The enemy had been working hard for the last six months, and we should have had a much tougher job had we been a few weeks later. They are certainly good engineers.

[1] One of our greatest soldiers. He was killed at Waterloo.

[2] A young engineer officer, mortally wounded in leading the stormers up the breach at Badajoz. *Vide* Napier, vol. iv. p. 426.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Castello Branco, April 22, 1812.
Received May 14.

I have one moment to tell you that we have no hopes of bringing Marmont to action. Lord Wellington's head-quarters are at Sabugal, and we proceed in that direction to-morrow. I suppose that after seeing the French safe out of Portugal, and leaving a few men to prevent their return, we shall retrace our steps towards Badajoz. This is, however, mere conjecture, but I do not see what other plan of operations can be pursued. Marmont has gained nothing by his late movement, except exasperating the Portuguese more and more against him. Had it not been for an extraordinary want of conduct (not to say of courage) on the part of General —— commanding the first Hussars, King's German Legion, who were left in this part, the enemy could never have penetrated so far as they did. Lord Wellington was very near bringing him to a general court martial.

I have heard from good authority that when the French army were informed of the capture of Badajoz, they were assembled at Villa Franca, and actually on the point of marching off the parade for the purpose of advancing to attack our position at Albuera, they gave three cheers and showed every token of satisfaction. Soult was so annoyed that, albeit unused to the melting mood, he actually burst into tears.

Ballasteros did not do much good at Seville. The convent containing the reserve ammunition, stores, &c. was too strongly fortified to be taken by a coup de main. Everything looks well, and with a few more

men we might do wonders. Soult cannot collect more than 25,000 men in the south, and Marmont not more than 20,000 here, under these circumstances they cannot hope to maintain even their present situation, and it is not, I think, being over sanguine to predict the evacuation of the greater part of Andalusia and Seville before the end of June.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Avon Cottage, May 4, 1812.

If your Lordship should not have heard any other account of the reported attempt to assassinate the Emperor of Russia than what the papers afford, you may perhaps thank me for sending your Lordship the following extract from a letter from St. Petersburg dated March 24, N. S., not only from what it mentions on the subject of the above rumour, but also for the political news it contains.

'Barclay de Tolly went yesterday or goes to-day. He is commander-in-chief for retaining his situation as Minister at war, he gives orders to all persons whatever. His appointment as commander of the *First Western Army* and Bagrations of the second are in the papers of Friday. Tormazoff commands the reserve, besides which the new raised recruits make a fourth, and amount to 100,000, none having been taken for sailors.

'The arrest of Sperinsky (formerly secretary to the Emperor) and Magnitzky makes still much noise. Mrs. Krehmer, a merchant's wife, and rather a pretty woman, with whom his Imperial Majesty flirts occasionally, was assured from high authority that they have not been

guilty of the offences attributed to them, namely, betraying the secrets of government or other treasonable acts, though their offence is *très grave*. In fact I believe they wished to know what was going on in all departments, especially Count Romanzoff's, and took means, probably unjustifiable ones, for obtaining the said information.

'The Emperor goes, I believe, next week, and I conclude that Romanzoff goes with him. Balascheff, Armfelt, Tschitchagoff, the two young princes of Mecklenburgh, and (they say) the Duc de Richelieu.

'Greig has received orders to serve in the Baltic fleet under Tate, and Crown commands the Archangel fleet. The other officers were authorised to leave Moscow by the post from hence on the 14th. They are fitting out everything that can swim, and have actually contracted for the building of 70 new gunboats.'

From the above account, it should seem that war is considered as very probable at St. Petersburg; Romanzoff being mentioned as one of the Emperor's suite is no very good omen of the manner in which, if war does take place, it will be carried on.

THE HON. MRS. ROBINSON[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, May 11, 1812.

My dear James,—I am shocked to inform you that Mr. Perceval was shot as he was entering the House of Commons to-day about five o'clock.

[1] Sister to the first Earl of Malmesbury. Married to Lord Grantham's brother.

He fell instantly, and faintly cried 'Murder' and died. The man is taken, and is a merchant at Liverpool, who has lately presented a petition, by name Bellingham. It is past seven o'clock, and I fear I shall miss the post.

Your affectionate aunt,

GERTRUDE ROBINSON.

THE HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

May 12, 1812.

The person who shot Mr. Perceval was named Bellingham, from Liverpool.

He had some pecuniary claims on Government, and had applied to Mr. Perceval to satisfy them, but he refused. In consequence Bellingham determined to assassinate him, for which purpose he had been waiting three weeks. On Mr. Perceval's entering the lobby he shot him. It is supposed the ball entered his heart; he cried out *I am murdered.*

He lived about ten minutes, surgical assistance was procured the instant he was shot, but no hopes given of saving his valuable life. The murderer was soon arrested, he had another small pistol in his pocket, confessed the fact, and was aware of his situation, which he seemed prepared to meet. After examining several witnesses, Bellingham was committed to Newgate. On the coming up of the coach to carry him to prison a great mob assembled, some of whom attempted to rescue him, but he was afterwards conveyed through a door at another part of the House and safely lodged in Newgate. Several of the deluded multitude were heard to cry 'Burdett for ever.'

THE HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, one o'clock Tuesday Morning, May 13, 1812.

The few lines I wrote you by post will assuredly cause you to be anxious for further particulars of the atrocious act that was committed in the House of Commons. I will endeavour to relate all I heard from Lord Clive, who, instead of dining with me, went immediately to the House. Mr. Perceval was going up the steps into the lobby, when the man leant over the shoulder of another man and shot Perceval through the heart, he staggered a few paces and fell, he lived some minutes, and pronounced in a very faint voice *murder*, which was the only word he uttered; he bled much, and the wound was probed, but to no purpose. Lord Walpole took a curricle that was waiting there, and drove away to fetch Home the surgeon.

The man never attempted to make his escape; his name is Bellingham, he is a Liverpool merchant whose trade has failed, and that is supposed to have led him on to this horrid action. He never attemped to deny the crime, but said, *I am the unhappy man, and I wish I was now Mr. Perceval!* He had another pistol. The depositions were taken before Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Coombes, and Mr. Whitbread at the House; this last behaved with great resolution, activity, and good sense. The confusion in the House was so great the Speaker could not obtain silence, and the House was adjourned. When the sad intelligence reached the Lords, Lord Arden immediately ran to his brother, and Lord Redesdale went to poor Mrs. Perceval. There was an idea that

Bellingham had been put in a hackney coach, and the door opened, but that is a mere report. Lord Clive begged Whitbread to wait for the guards before they attempted to remove him, and this was complied with, and he was taken through the Speaker's house, and Lord Clive's chariot was waiting to receive him in the Speaker's court, and Lavender,[1] Michael Angelo Taylor, and Lord Clive went in the carriage with him, surrounded by the Horse Guards, two police behind the carriage, and another on the box; they drove very fast through the Horse Guards, and he was taken in at the park door to the Privy Council chamber for a further examination. The mob shouted at the carriage, but it seemed rather applause at his being secured than from any wish to rescue or favour him. He is a decent well-looking man, of about forty, and has been living six weeks in lodgings in Millman Street Foundling Hospital at half guinea a week.

At Lady Stafford's I heard he had been known to Lord G. Leveson in Russia, and he was then mad; he was perfectly calm and collected yesterday, and from all that has been stated the tear sometimes stood in his eye, but he made no resistance whatever, and, if anything, appeared to be astounded and said, *he was fated to do this deed.* There is another report than he intended shooting Lord G. Leveson, who had thwarted some of his commercial schemes in Russia. The only consolation to be derived from what has at present transpired seems to be that it has a little removed the idea that it was a combined plan and the commencement of further mischief. All accounts agree that Bellingham acted

[1] Chief Constable of police, then called a Bow Street officer.

entirely from motives of personal resentment for what he supposed had injured him, but it happening just at the moment when Lefevre had escaped, naturally gave very alarming ideas at first. Mr. Ryder was in the House, and so overwhelmed he could neither speak nor act.

In the Lords they were more collected and voted an address (which was properly moved for by Lord Radnor) to desire the Prince Regent to inquire into this business, &c. Lord Harrowby is, I hear, amazingly hurt. Lord Liverpool rose to acquaint the Regent of it. My dinner of course was not a gay or regular one, but Lord Collier, Frederick Robinson, and Sullivan[2] procured all the intelligence that could be had, and from the fountain head. We heard the mob shouting twice, and Sullivan saw the carriage and guards driving as fast as possible, but he did not recognise Lord Collier's carriage.

Lord St. Helens and Mr. Drummond also came, and from the latter I heard Mrs. Perceval was quite as well as could be expected, and tolerably composed.

His uncle Mr. Drummond married Mr. Perceval's sister, and had been with Mrs. Perceval. Who we can have for a minister it is difficult to decide. It must either be Lord Wellesley or Canning. The loss to the country at this moment is irreparable. Lady Malmesbury is a great alarmist, and I believe would have been departing for Park Place immediately; and while Lady Minto and Miss Godfrey had terrified each other with their own surmises, and after every one else had gone to Lady Stafford's, the door opened and the footman announced Mr. Lamb, and in walked a man nobody knew. They thought they were going to be killed,

[1] Many years in the War Office. He married Lord Palmerston's youngest sister.

but Lady Malmesbury had the presence of mind to say she believed he had mistaken the house, for Mrs. Lamb had a party and this man meant to go there and the servant conducted him right at last.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, May 13, 1812.

Your aunt sent you off the account of yesterday's horrid catastrophe, and the newspapers will give you a most correct account of the whole business. Lord Clive carried the assassin in his own carriage from the Speaker's private door to the Secretary of State's office to avoid the excessive mob; he says he was a very decent and respectable-looking man, was much depressed, and now and then a tear fell down his cheeks, but that he had not the least appearance of insanity. He had said (not to him) '*that he was fated* to do it,' which looked like an enthusiast; but I firmly believe he was a man driven by distress to a desperate deed, and thereby becoming a fit instrument for those who in the contemplation of some great project wished to get rid of the only efficient member of this weak Government. The Speaker entirely lost his presence of mind, and did the contrary to what he ought, by adjourning instead of keeping the House together, and did not even send a message to the Lords, who, as you perceive, did everything that was right. The mob was immense all the evening, but perfectly quiet. Whatever *is to be* is not yet *commenced*. Mr. Ryder is highly blameable, as I know he had repeated notices 'that something dreadful was to take place,' and took no precautions, and this Bellingham's own testimony corroborates.

A hundred people have been here since I began my letter, but I have heard nothing of any importance, but people in general seem to hope the assassin was unconnected with any *associate*. The House of Lords was to assemble to receive the Regent's answer at two o'clock. The Sessions begin on Friday, and he will probably be hanged on Monday.

I own I think there should have been a *special* commission not to give a *week's interval* to be filled up. As to the political consequences I know nothing about them, but whoever comes in must form so weak a Government that they cannot last a month,[1] for indeed poor Perceval was at the front of the precipice himself.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Niza, May 13, 1812.

We left Estramadura in a hurry, two days after the capture of Badajoz, to put a stop to Marshal Marmont's marauding parties, who had pushed on rather farther than was pleasant; with the exception, however, of the destruction of a few stores at Castello Branco and Celerico, which were burnt to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, very little harm was done, and even that little might have been avoided had it not been for a considerable want of conduct in the officer commanding the German Hussars, who were left near Guarda in March last. I do not imagine Marmont had any hopes of gaining possession of Ciudad Rodrigo or

[1] The old proverb saying, that 'Threatened men live long,' &c., is here verified, as the succeeding Government (Lord Liverpool's), lasted till 1828—sixteen years.

Almeida, as he brought neither battering train nor any other apparatus for a siege.

Whatever might have been his intentions, they were completely frustrated by Lord Wellington's rapid movements, and I fancy the French were very well pleased to find themselves safe on the other side of the Aqueda.

Report says that nothing had been done by the Spaniards towards strengthening Rodrigo from the time we left it, and that the money which was to have paid the peasants who were employed by Lord Wellington found its way into the pockets of the governor and the general. The Duque[1] is at present at Fuente Guinaldo, superintending the provisioning of his dukedom and Almeida, in both which places six months' provisions are to be left.

Magazines are likewise forming at Elvas and Badajoz, and when these are completed, which will be in two or three weeks, the idea is that the whole army (with the exception of one or two brigades) will again be assembled in the neighbourhood of the latter, and something serious will be undertaken against Soult, who must either fight us in the field or abandon the blockade of Cadiz, and the whole of Andalusia.

I should hope we may be able to collect 35,000 disposable infantry and 4,500 cavalry, which must be nearly equal to anything Soult can get together, and if so, his situation at Seville would be by no means pleasant. With 10,000 more British infantry we should make a brilliant campaign, but I fear the high price of corn in England,

[1] Lord Wellington had been created Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, after his capture of that fortress.

joined to the patriotic endeavours of Sir Francis Burdett, will prevent our receiving those reinforcements which might at this time be of the utmost importance, not only to the Peninsula, but to the world.

The guerillas are extremely active, and seem to be rapidly increasing, both in numbers and enterprize. This halt, which is the first we have had since January, has proved a good thing both for man and beast, as (to say the truth) we were beginning to knock up. At present the army is far from unhealthy, and we are extremely well supplied, and likely to continue so.

Not so the French, who continue to desert in tolerable numbers, 26 (most of them native Frenchmen) passed through this town yesterday, they all give the same reason, want of food and *no pay*. The new regency at Cadiz are extremely popular, and are, I believe, going on as well as possible, and if they had a little more money might do much. Ballasteros has upwards of 10,000 very good troops, and will probably be of great assistance in our future operations in the South.

THE HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, May 14, 1812.

I have just received yours of the 12th inst., expressing those feelings which must affect every right-hearted and right-headed person at this moment. Frederick,[1] after having delayed his departure one day, went off with Grantham in the York mail last night, to join his yeomanry. I confess I think his parliamentary duties

[1] Afterwards Lord Ripon.

should have been paramount, and I should have expressed this opinion, had I been able to see him yesterday or the day before for an instant, alone. Lord Palmerston will keep watch for you, and send any summons that he may deem expedient for you to have. The alarmists circulate many horrible stories, and while there may be an atom of truth in *none* of them, their general circulation is calculated to intimidate, and consequently enervate, the commonalty at large.

I have no doubt that whatever apathy may have prevailed, Government are now sufficiently on the alert to take every precaution within their reach, and more cannot be done.

I am glad to see that Sir Francis Burdett has expressed his abhorrence of this atrocious act, and united in approving the address to the throne.

Lord Granville Leveson was not personally acquainted with Bellingham, but knew him to be a very troublesome fellow when in Russia, that he passed three days in Lord G. Leveson's house, but without his seeing him, as he had made him over to Mr. Stuart. Yet it is generally supposed he would have shot Lord G. Leveson, had he come first to the House.

Canning was at Brompton, and knew nothing of the event till he came to the House about eight o'clock and found all the doors locked, and was then told why. Various reports fly about respecting a new administration, and Lord Wellesley and Canning are mentioned, but they cannot act without others, and although at a crisis like the present, one should imagine party spirit would give way to the general good and support of the nation, I do not find union at all more likely to be

effected now than on former occasions. Lady Hertford's party to-morrow night, is, by a card I have just received, *unavoidably postponed.* This is in some respects wise. It is the day of Bellingham's trial, and doubtless she is well advised. The drawing-room and the Prince's levée are both put off.

REV. A. HARRIS TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, half-past five o'clock, May 19, 1812.

The report of yesterday concerning the ministerial arrangements is not true.

The *truth* is that a negotiation with Lord Wellesley and Canning was begun yesterday, but had not ended successfully the middle of to-day. It is thought Ministers will, and some say they must, notify some arrangement to Parliament to-morrow, but this remains to be proved.

MR. WILLIAM ROSE TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Portman Square, June 1, 1812.

Mr. Wortley has asked the Opposition (Mr. Canning having previously informed the House that Lord Wellesley had authority to form an Administration) whether up to this morning any application had been made to gentlemen of that party to form any part of this administration which they had declined on personal or any other motives. It was understood that Mr. Ponsonby had no objection to answer that question, but Mr. Yorke objected to such mode of discussion, from apprehension of its being carried to too great an extent, but

at length Lord Castlereagh assented, it was put and answered in the negative.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mealhada, about three leagues from Espija, June 9, 1812.
Received June 29.

You may more easily conceive than I can express the sensation which the horrible assassination of poor Perceval, and all the disgraceful and alarming scenes which have followed it, have caused in this army. As military men we are naturally all pretty much inclined to throw the blame on the want of energy and determination shown in the first instance by the interior Government, and particularly by the Home Minister.

For my own part I impute no small part of the present unsettled state of the country to the want of sufficient severity in Burdett's riots, which certainly encouraged the idea that the mob might do anything.

I am, however, heartily glad to see that the west continues quiet, and I trust are more likely to assist in keeping others in order than to require it themselves.

You may conceive our impatience for a mail; we have no news since the 15th ult., at which time nothing seemed settled as to poor Perceval's successor.

I own I should like to see Lord Wellesley and Canning again in office, and I cannot help thinking this will be the case. If (which Heaven forbid) 'all the talents' should come into power, I suppose this country will be abandoned, and peace patched up as soon as possible. I fear that so unhappy an event would alarm Russia and Sweden, and induce them to submit to any terms rather than run the risk of having

Buonaparte against them at a time when so little assistance is to be expected from us. Altogether it appears to me that this event could never have happened at a more unfortunate moment.

You will see by the date of this how completely deceived I have been as to our probable operations since the capture of Badajoz. The great feature of Lord Wellington's character is to keep every one in profound ignorance of his intentions, and he has perfectly succeeded in this instance. Now, however, his plan has developed itself, and before you receive this I trust we shall have struck an important blow. Nearly the whole army, viz. the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions are assembled within a short distance of head-quarters (Guinaldo). The Light Division is, I hear, near Rodrigo, and General Hill with the 2nd, and I suppose General Hamilton's divisions, has crossed the Tagus, and is moving up towards this place. The whole of the cavalry is advancing as well as the artillery.

Altogether I should hope we may collect towards 40,000 infantry, and 4,500 cavalry, with which something may be done. This place is about seven days' march from Salamanca, and I think the odds are we shall see that town by the end of next week. Marmont is understood to be there at present, but with a very small force. Report says that he is endeavouring to collect every man he can scrape from all parts of the Peninsula, and if he is stout we must try the event of a general action; at all events this must operate as a grand diversion in favour of the Spaniards in every quarter, and if we are successful the French will find

themselves awkwardly situated. We have certainly never yet entered Spain under such favourable auspices. The army is in high health and spirits and perfectly confident. We are well off for supplies, and our means of transport are in most excellent condition, and infinitely improved within these few months. We do not *depend* on the Spaniards, although we *may expect* very important assistance from them, and our numbers are not much inferior to those of the enemy; in short, if fortunate we may hope that the campaign of 1812 will proceed at least as brilliantly as it has commenced, and that we may yet see Madrid. General Hill's conduct in the late little business at Almaraz is spoken of by all present in the highest possible terms. Sir Thomas Graham is far from well, and I should think not likely to last long. In that case I hope Sir S. Cotton will have some distinguished command in England or elsewhere, and Hill will then be second in command. We reached this place yesterday, having moved quietly up from Niza since the first. General Charles Alten[1] (not the man in the Hussars) has the Light Division, and General Hope the seventh.

They are both good officers, particularly the former. The harvest in this country is begun, and promises to be the most abundant known for many years.

Heaven grant it may be the same with you in England.

[1] A very able and gallant officer, and a great contrast to his namesake, Victor Alten.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Salamanca, June 18, 1812.

I have just time to inform you that we entered this town at daybreak yesterday. Marshal Marmont did not, I believe, expect us so soon, or in such force. He has left between 500 and 600 men in two forts, which commanded the bridge over the Tormes at this place.

They will soon be in our possession. The army forded above and below the town without loss. Our reception by the Spaniards (notwithstanding the French having been domesticated here nearly three years) was enthusiastic. Report says that the enemy are collecting in all possible haste in the neighbourhood of Valladolid, and I should not wonder at their then risking a general action. If unsuccessful, which is more than probable, their situation in the Peninsula would be very critical, at all events, this movement of Lord Wellington's must be attended with great benefit, and will afford a grand opportunity to the guerillas, who, from their late exploits, will, I doubt not, profit by it. We are enlisting the Spaniards, and incorporating them into our own regiments in the proportion of ten to a company, a measure which, *if successful*, will be attended with very important consequences.

The Light Division and cavalry advanced on the road to Valladolid. I imagine that the united force, British and Portuguese, amounts to about 35,000 effective infantry and upwards of 3,500 cavalry, in the best possible state of discipline, &c. We have besides a few thousand Spaniards, who are useful in various ways.

The number I believe to be fully equal to anything the enemy can collect. An English mail is just arrived to the 29th ult., and has, in some measure, relieved our minds from the state of horror and anxiety which the late accounts had produced.

We are all rejoiced to find there is still some chance of the country escaping from the fangs of '*all the talents*,' and that the present glorious opportunity may not be thrown away.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Salamanca, June 25, 1812.
Received July 21.

We crossed the Tormes about a mile above and below the town on the morning of the 18th; Marmont having left about 600 men in a very strong fort (which had been constructing these two years) and which commands the bridge. This it became necessary to possess, and approaches were immediately commenced; but whether owing to want of skill in the engineers, or to the actual strength of the works, we have hitherto succeeded but badly. In the mean time, Marmont having collected his army near *Toro*, advanced with about 35,000 men, and Lord Wellington, leaving the 6th division to carry on the works against the fort, took up, on the evening of the 21st, a very strong position about two miles in front of Salamanca, and the enemy, after some smart skirmishing, encamped very quietly in the plain below, at the distance of about three-quarters of a mile, and of course showing us every man and beast in their army. As from our position we had every advantage, both of perceiving all their movements and

completely concealing our own, and as their numbers were certainly inferior to ours, we fully expected to attack them on the morning of the 22nd.

This, however, it appears Lord Wellington was as fully determined no inducement should prevail on him to attempt, and after making a reconnaissance on the 23rd, which produced some severe skirmishing on our right, Marmont moved, during the following night, to a range of heights about a league on the road from this place to Valladolid, from whence he detached about 10,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, for the purpose of turning our right, and, I imagine, of cutting off our communication with Rodrigo. The 1st and 7th divisions were, however, immediately detached under Graham, and recrossed the Tormes above the town, and, after manœuvring during most part of yesterday, parallel to the enemy, who had crossed a few miles higher up, both parties returned last night to their first positions.

On the night of the 23rd, an attempt was made to carry by assault the fort in the town, but, owing either to some mismanagement, or to the breaches not being practicable, I regret to say it completely failed, and General Bowes, with from 50 to 70 men, was lost.

It unfortunately happens that our stock of ammunition for the battering guns is expended, and operations are therefore at a stand. In the mean time, the enemy are, they say, receiving strong reinforcements. Bonet is expected in a day or two with 6,000, and Joseph Buonaparte is moving this way with a strong division. This will probably augment Marmont's army to from 55 to 60,000, and I do not imagine Lord Wellington

will choose them to remain in his present situation, as our right and rear would be completely exposed.

Under these circumstances, I conceive we shall fall back a few leagues on the road to Rodrigo, where we shall be perfectly secure, having by our late movement drawn nearly the whole effective French force from every part of Leon, Castille, Madrid, the Asturias, &c., and of course afforded the Spanish armies under Castaños and Mendizabel every opportunity they could desire, which, if they have profited by, much may be hoped for. After all, I should not be very much surprised at a general action, for though Lord Wellington will not (apparently) *attack*, yet he has shown no disposition to shun an action, and with our present force, which is about 20,000 British, 17,000 Portuguese, and 3,000 Spanish infantry, with 3,000 British and 1,200 Spanish cavalry, we are, *acting on the defensive*, fully a match for 50,000 French, *under Marmont*. We have, as you may suppose, had rather severe work during the last week, having been constantly bivouacked without shade, under a burning sun by day, and uncommonly cold and foggy nights, which has increased our sick list very considerably, and, to make the matter worse, our baggage being some leagues in the rear, we are beastly in the extreme.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Camp near Salamanca, June 30, 1812.

On May 2, we reached Niza after a series of most fagging marches, and were not sorry to have a halt,

all being completely knocked up as well as our unfortunate animals, one of whom I left on the road, having died of sheer fatigue. On our march we found that all the villages along the road had been evacuated by the inhabitants on the approach of the French, who destroyed the houses, &c., in their usual way, and frequently put to death any old man or woman whom age or infirmity had obliged to remain. General Victor Alten, who was left near Almeida with his regiment of hussars when we marched to the south, appeared to have imitated the plan laid down for the *inhabitants* rather too closely, as he generally kept three good marches behind the enemy, and crossed the Tagus at Villa Velha while General La Cour with three battalions of *militia*, kept his ground at Sarnadas! Lord Wellington was very angry and a general court-martial is talked of. On the 20th we received sudden orders to move by Castello de Vide into Spain as a diversion in favour of General Hill, who had marched against Almarez; we heard the next day that he had perfectly succeeded, and returned to Castello de Vide, which is certainly by far the most beautiful town I have yet seen in Portugal. The next day I rode to a most curious place called Marvao (about a league from Castello de Vide); it occupies the summit of a nearly perpendicular rock, there are two roads cut in zig-zags and paved; on one side of the town is a citadel, it is fortified and appears perfectly impregnable; the view from the top is magnificent. The French have never been there. On the 30th, I was glad to receive a *gun* and *some powder* from England. There is plenty of game about Niza (to which place we had returned a

few days before), and during our halt there I killed several hares and some quails.

Early in June we resumed our march, and on the 7th, near Rendo, I had some very excellent wood-pigeon and dove shooting. I killed four of the former and nine of the latter in less than two hours.

On the 12th I rode to Ciudad Rodrigo to see how the works were getting on.

There were five new forts constructing, which will much improve the place. The old breach is very badly repaired and the masonry vile; the garrison without exception were the most ragged miserable-looking little wretches I ever saw; they were Gallicians. The shops seemed well supplied and the town a little repaired. The weather was intensely hot and I had a bathe in the Agueda. This river abounds with fish, principally a sort of *barbel*.

On the 17th, we forded the Tormes near the village of Santa Marta, about a mile from Salamanca. Marmont had retired during the night, leaving 700 men in some very strong works constructed from the ruins of two convents and which commanded the bridge.

On the 18th, I went all over Salamanca, which must have been a most superb city; most of the colleges and convents are destroyed; the cathedral and Irish convent only remain, the former is uncommonly fine. The inhabitants appeared nearly frantic with joy, and when Lord Wellington entered the town the women insisted on kissing him, which two or three succeeded in doing. On the 20th, we took up the position of San Cristoval about four o'clock P.M.

The French army, about 25,000 strong, moving across

the plain occupied the villages of Morisco and Castelanos immediately in our front and nearly within range.

The 6th division remained in the town to carry on the siege, and our batteries kept up a sharp fire. The allied army on the heights amounted to 37,000 infantry and nearly 5,000 cavalry. On the 22nd the enemy gained possession of the rising ground on our right, but were immediately driven back by General Graham at the head of the *chasseurs britanniques* with little loss on either side. Batteries were thrown up and every preparation made in case of an attack, which Lord Wellington certainly expected, and which only can account for *his not attacking*. A serjeant of the Brunswickers deserted when with the advanced videttes, in the middle of the day before all our faces, running into the French lines with a handkerchief in his hand. During the following night, Marmont retired, and the first and seventh divisions returned to the old bivouac near Santa Marta, and crossed the Tormes the next morning in consequence of the enemy manœuvring to turn our right, but finding us ready they retired again, and we resumed our old ground near Santa Marta. An attempt to storm the fort on the night of the 24th failed.

On the 27th, the fort was set on fire with red-hot shot, and surrendered with 700 prisoners.

The works are beautiful and extremely strong. We had a grand ball in Salamanca on the evening of the 28th, given by the inhabitants to Lord Wellington, some of the women uncommonly pretty.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Medina del Campo, July 6, 1812.
Received July 28.

I have so little to tell you that I am almost ashamed to write so repeatedly, but as you say that everything is interesting, I will not let this mail go without a dispatch.

I believe my last was from Salamanca *previous* to Marmont's advance, which produced one of the *finest* but at the same time most *extraordinary* spectacles of the kind I ever saw, viz., an English army of nearly 35,000 infantry in position on a range of commanding heights, and a French army of not more than 25,000 quietly encamped on the plain (an immense one without a single tree) below.

We remained looking at each other in this position for three days, at the end of which time Marmont, having, I imagine, discovered his mistake, took his departure. I believe that Lord Wellington fully expected that the French would attack, and would now give one of his ears that *he* had attacked them. In all human probability their army must have been annihilated. I fear another such opportunity will never occur again.

The forts and 700 prisoners were taken, partly by storm and partly by treaty, on the 27th, and on the 29th the whole army moved in pursuit of the enemy, who retreated on the previous day.

On the 2nd, the French army was entirely across the Douro, having destroyed the bridges. The fords

though deep are nevertheless, I believe, practicable, and will probably become more so.

We occupy a line extending from this point towards Zamora; head-quarters being at Rueda. The French still occupy Toro, Tordesillas, &c.

They are said to give out an intention of falling back as far as Burgos if pressed, but I do not think we are likely to oblige them to adopt this measure. The Spaniards must now come forwards, and if they ever do mean to exert themselves, surely they cannot hope for a more favourable opportunity. As far as outward professions go, no one can certainly be better disposed than they appear to be. Our reception by all ranks is enthusiastic to a degree of absurdity, but I much fear little more is to be hoped for. Castaños does not appear to do anything, and of Mendizabel we hear nothing.

If they do not exert themselves manfully, we shall certainly winter in Portugal. General Graham left us yesterday for England. He has a dangerous complaint in one of his eyes, which I fear he will lose. His time of life is too far advanced to stand the fag of so active a campaign as this has been. Indeed the constant exposure to the intense heat of the sun by day, and the extreme cold of the night, which is past conception in this climate, tries the constitution very severely and has sent numbers to the hospital.

We lost a most gallant officer in poor General Bowes, he was at the time so ill from his wounds at Badajoz that he intended setting out for England the following week.

General Cole has joined the army, and commands his old division, the fourth. General Pakenham (in

the absence of General Picton) the third, General Hope the seventh, and General Alten the Light, General Leith the fifth (I set them down as I recollect them). Sir S. Cotton is now second in command.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cantro Sillio, between Alba de Tormes and Segovia, July 25, 1812.
Received August 17.

I have just time to congratulate you on the very pretty drubbing received by Marmont on the 22nd and 23rd instants, who certainly brought nearly 10,000 more bayonets and about 2,000 more cavalry into the field than we did. The 'Gazette' will inform you much more fully of the action than I can pretend to do. One hour more daylight would have cost the French another 10,000 men. Indeed nothing but a thick wood and darkness saved their army from total destruction.

Brother Joe must now take care of his capital; not that I expect we shall go there yet. Our loss in British is comparatively light, the brunt fell on the Portuguese, who behaved nobly. You will be sorry for poor General Le Marchant, his loss is a public one. Generals Cole and Leith are both, I believe, likely to do well. Whether the Spaniards will now venture to assist, I know not, but I fear little is to be expected from them. The French general officers have suffered in numbers, Marmont has lost his arm. We (the 1st division) were hardly engaged, the 3rd and Light scarcely at all. At present these three divisions form the advance, and

shall move I imagine pretty rapidly. The enemy were 'en pleine déroute' but have begun to collect again. All confidence must, however, have forsaken them, and they are no longer to be dreaded.

This may raise the siege of Cadiz, and a few more reinforcements *may* drive the French beyond the Ebro, before January 1, 1813.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Marte Major, August 2, 1812.
Received August 24.

As there seems some chance of letters going to England in a day or two, I think I cannot better employ a short time of leisure than in endeavouring to give you a sketch of our late operations, though I cannot hope to tell you much that you do not know already.

It appears to have been Marmont's intention in all his late manœuvres to threaten our communication with Ciudad Rodrigo, and by this means (without fighting) to oblige us to abandon everything north of the Tormes. Had he been contented with this it is very probable he might have succeeded, and as far as the 22nd he certainly displayed great abilities. The manœuvre by which he passed the Douro on the 17th was a masterpiece. They had appeared for some time to be working hard to re-establish the bridge at Toro, and on the evening of the 16th, having moved down a considerable force from Tordesillas, crossed over two divisions. Lord Wellington was of course obliged to move rapidly from *Rueda la Nava* &c. to preserve his communication

with Salamanca, and we made a severe forced march during the night to Canizal for this purpose, of which it appears the enemy had immediate information, as they directly recrossed the bridge at Toro (which they blew up), and having also countermarched during the night, crossed by the ford of Pollos at daybreak on the following morning. During the 18th some sharp skirmishing took place, in which we had rather the advantage, and on the evening of the 19th both armies took up a position between Canizal and Vittoria. On the 20th the enemy showed his whole force, consisting, I believe, of about 48,000, of which 5,000 were cavalry. Ours did not certainly exceed 37,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry. Marmont again moved round our right, and obliged Lord Wellington to file off rapidly towards our old position near Salamanca. This movement afforded a most beautiful military spectacle. The whole of both armies were visible. The French moved on the high ground and we on the plain, and so near as to be frequently cannonaded on the march, though without much effect. On the 21st both armies crossed the Tormes; we at the ford near Salamanca, and the enemy about four leagues higher, when the allied army was formed *en masse* on the heights above the village of Gargante. On the 22nd as usual Marmont attempted to turn our right, but Lord Wellington having been joined during the day by the 5th and 38th regiments, General D'Urban's cavalry, together with some pretty strong detachments, determined on retreating *no further*, and much to the astonishment of the enemy, after suffering them completely to commit themselves, by extending almost

round our right, he suddenly attacked them with the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th divisions, drove them from the heights, and after a sharp struggle of about three hours completely routed them.

Fortunately for the French they had a wood of considerable depth in their rear, which, together with want of daylight, saved their army from utter annihilation. I am fully convinced that if we had had two hours' more light, not 10,000 of Marmont's army could have escaped. The 1st, 7th, and Light divisions, amounting at least to 15,000 men, were perfectly fresh and might have been at Alba de Tormes before the enemy. Nothing could exceed the good conduct of the troops engaged, Portuguese as well as British ; and the behaviour of poor General le Marchant's brigade and cavalry, and of General D'Urban's was particularly noble. We pushed on that evening about three leagues on the Madrid road, crossed the Tormes the next morning at daybreak, and came up with their rear-guard not far from that river. They were instantly most gallantly charged by General Bock's brigade of heavy Germans, and two guns with upwards of 1,200 prisoners taken. The main body of their army was however so much in front that Lord Wellington deemed it impossible to overtake them with the infantry, and *our* share in the pursuit ceased ; the cavalry and light artillery however continued to harass them for some days. Taking it altogether this appears to be the most brilliant event of this war.

Three or four eagles, twelve guns, and nearly 7,000 prisoners are (considering the force and the composition of the armies—one almost entirely native French-

men and the other not much more than *one-third British*), no small triumph for Lord Wellington, who may now certainly be fairly reckoned equal to any general in the world. The consequences of this action must be most important. In the first place, it secures to us (for some time at least) the whole of the kingdom of Leon, which is the most fertile in Spain, and contains resources amply sufficient for the maintenance of our army for the remainder of the campaign, which is a point of immense importance; secondly, the spirit it must infuse into the Spaniards may have great effect throughout the Peninsula, and as by this affair Madrid is nearly unprotected, I should not be surprised at its leading to the abandonment of the siege of Cadiz, and the whole of Spain south of the Sierra Morena. In fact if Buonaparte does not reinforce his armies in this country very strongly before the end of October, I will venture to predict they will have very little south of the Ebro by that time, that is supposing the 10,000 men expected from Sicily actually arrive. Valladolid, with 800 sick and wounded, was abandoned by the enemy some days back and is now occupied by the Spaniards. Lord Wellington is manœuvring to prevent the junction of Joseph Buonaparte with the remains of Marmont's army, which will be rather a difficult job for them, the point of junction is I believe Aranda. Joseph was two days ago at Segovia with a motley crew of about 10,000, equal to about as many Spaniards. He is, I believe, most thoroughly alarmed, and will be very glad to find himself *north* of Lord Wellington. This place is about three leagues from Valladolid and close to Pontillo; we are likely to remain quiet a day or two,

which after our late severe service will be rather a luxury, and is moreover almost absolutely necessary, as we are daily sending large numbers to the rear from mere fatigue ; the excessive heat of the weather joined to incessant marching having knocked them up. Poor Beckford left us the day before the action, he is now however fast recovering ; I never was better. Whilst at Medina del Campo I had some tolerable shooting, and bagged a good many pintail, wild-fowl, &c. I am writing this with a pen made of a bustard's feather of my own killing (you will now I know envy me). They abound here, but are so cunning I have as yet only bagged one.

Marmont's wound is in a bad way, and the last accounts left him in considerable danger. I suppose Soult or Suchet will take the command here with all speed. Their army is almost without generals, and completely broken and disorganised ; they behaved far from well. Generals Cole and Leith and Sir S. Cotton are all, I hear, doing well ; but I am sorry to say General Picton has been obliged to go to Lisbon ; he is a severe loss.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Madrid, August 15, 1812.

It is, you may believe, with no small pleasure I am able to direct a letter from this town, which we reached yesterday in time to witness the surrender of nearly 2,000 picked troops, together with an immense quantity of artillery, stores, &c. Our movements have of late been so constant, and the events which have occurred

have followed each other so rapidly, that I cannot pretend to give even a sketch of them.

The battle of Salamanca and the manœuvres which preceded it, will not, I flatter myself, lower the army or its inimitable commander in the eyes of the world.

It is certainly one of the most brilliant events of the war, and its consequences bid fair to be most important. From all accounts it appears that Marmont's loss was greater than was at first imagined, and that he was unable to collect at Burgos more than one half the infantry he brought into the field on the 22nd ultimo, and these in a most miserable and disorganised state.

Under these circumstances Lord Wellington has left the Gallician army under Santocildes (about 11,000 very tolerable troops) and towards 9,000 British and Portuguese under General Clinton (having their respective head-quarters the former at Valladolid and the latter at Cuellan) to protect our rear and left flank, and has moved the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, and Light divisions, amounting to about 22,000 infantry with from 4,000 to 5,000 Spaniards to this place ; which Joseph Buonaparte abandoned at our approach, leaving a strong garrison in the Retiro, which they have been fortifying these four years, and I presume imagined would make a long defence. Unlike most of the enemy's military calculations, they appear to have evinced considerable want of skill in this instance, as from the quantity of powder in it and the smallness of the principal work it was perfectly untenable, and its immediate surrender if attacked with red-hot shot inevitable. The only drawback to our success seems to be the immense number of prisoners we are sending to England to be

fed, and as the greater part are French we can hardly venture to employ them in our service.

I believe that since the commencement of this campaign their number does not fall short of 20,000. It is a pity we could not employ them on some national work. The Spaniards are now beginning to recover from the astonishment which our success occasioned, and are *illuminating* and *vivaing* with all their might.

This city, which has hardly suffered at all from *French civilisation*, presents a really magnificent spectacle. The streets are ornamented during the day with every possible device, and illuminated every night, and the inhabitants are (generally speaking) to appearance at least, heartily glad of the departure of their late masters, whose affairs at present certainly are not in a flourishing state. Joseph is supposed to be at Toledo waiting for Soult, who must of course now determine on a decided line of conduct, and either abandon Andalusia altogether and retreat on Valencia or advance and give us battle. I should rather think that the Retiro having fallen the *former* is the most probable line.

Indeed they all give out that every part of Spain south of the Ebro is to be abandoned, and if so, I don't see why they need retain any, excepting the strong places in Arragon and Catalonia, which it must of course be a work of time to dispossess them of. If the Russians make anything of a fight we shall, I trust, weaken the enemy so much that nothing but very large reinforcements can give him a chance of keeping the field, and these there seems no chance of his receiving. From

every consideration it seems probable that we shall remain some time in this neighbourhood. Our present position is the most threatening we can occupy, and we completely cut off all communication between the French armies of the north and the south. We are besides rather in need of a little rest, having sent a considerable number of men and officers to the rear, from the incessant fatigue of the last two months. The weather is intensely hot, which contributes not a little to augment our sick list. We are, however, extremely well supplied, and on the whole in good order. Don Carlos D'Espara is *pro tempore* Governor of Madrid. He is a very good man and will do whatever Lord Wellington wishes. The new Constitution was yesterday solemnly read in all the churches, and Te Deum and High Mass celebrated with great splendour. The effect was certainly extremely grand. In the evening we had a grand ball, from which I thought myself fortunate in escaping alive and with my coat on my back. The King's Palace here, which has been left uninjured, is by far the most magnificent in every respect I have yet seen, and is far beyond anything we can boast of in England.

The palaces of some of the principal nobility are likewise superb, and fitted up at an enormous expense. A considerable number of Spaniards of all ranks left this place with Joseph, but when it is recollected that his government has now been established here nearly four years, and that all his principal Ministers were Spaniards, this is not surprising. The numbers of miserable wretches who are literally dying of starvation in the streets is enormous.

The inhabitants, however, seem to have reconciled themselves completely to this (to us) horrible sight; they compute the people who have perished in this way at upwards of 10,000 this year, but this I can hardly credit.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Madrid, August 18, 1812.

After leaving Salamanca the end of June last, we advanced by Canizal to Medina del Campo, where we remained ten or twelve days. The villages on our route cruelly destroyed. Medina is a tolerably good town, and the country abounds with bustards, wild ducks, teal, a sort of pintail, grouse, and many kinds of game of the grouse species I never saw before. I had very good sport, killed *one* magnificent bustard and numbers of grouse, teal, &c., also several stone curlews. The weather was intensely hot. On July 17 the 4th and Light divisions were nearly cut off not far from Castrijon. We made a long night march, and manœuvred all the following day.

The enemy were charged by the 4th division with great success. General Carrier taken, and about 200 prisoners. On the 20th, both armies were drawn up opposite each other near Cabeça; at daylight Marmont threatened our right, and we marched parallel to the enemy, sometimes within shot and always ready for action, from six o'clock A.M. to three o'clock P.M., when the enemy turned off to the left. We continued our march the next day, and crossed the Tormes at our

old ford about nine o'clock at night and moved *en masse* to the heights of *Arapiles* during the most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning I ever witnessed. A thunderbolt fell among the heavy cavalry, killed and wounded between twenty and thirty men, and some horses; a great number of the latter broke loose. The next morning both armies manœuvred nearly in contact, and every preparation was made for our retreat to Rodrigo, which was to have commenced at seven o'clock P.M., when fortunately about two o'clock Marmont pushed his left wing so far round us, that Lord Wellington was enabled to attack it with great advantage. The fifth division broke the French line, and General le Marchant's brigade of heavy cavalry charged at the same time, and completely destroyed two brigades; the action then became general and the enemy were *en pleine déroute* by seven o'clock. The first and Light divisions, which were in reserve, were then pushed on in pursuit, and had we moved two hours sooner nearly the whole of the French army would in all probability have been destroyed.

The darkness of the night and the thick woods, however, favoured their retreat. We managed to overtake them the next morning at daylight, and their rear-guard, consisting of 1,200 infantry, was taken. The prisoners taken in these two days amounted to nearly 7,000. We took, likewise, nineteen pieces of artillery and three eagles. Marmont was wounded.

Our loss was about 5,000. We pushed on to Arevalo on the three following days, when, finding that Joseph Buonaparte was on this side the Guadarrano with 12,000 men, the 3rd and 7th divisions were left

to look after him, and the remainder moved on to Valladolid, which the Spaniards under Castanos entered on the 29th, the French having retreated to Aranda. Finding there was no chance of our getting up with them again, Lord Wellington determined to move on to Madrid, which place we reached on the 13th of this month. A smart skirmish of cavalry took place near Galapagan on the evening of the 11th, in which General D'Urban's brigade of Portuguese cavalry ran away most gloriously, and two six pounders belonging to Major Ross's troop of horse artillery were taken.

Joseph Buonaparte abandoned this city on the 12th, leaving a garrison of 2,500 picked troops in the Retiro, which place was invested on the evening of our arrival, and being threatened with *red-hot shot* surrendered about twelve o'clock the next day at discretion. Our division arrived just in time to see the garrison march out of the Retiro, and *pile their arms*. They were the finest body of men I almost ever saw, and were at that time one and all beastly drunk; they *consoled* themselves with the idea they had not surrendered to the Spaniards, who they hate and despise most heartily, and what was extraordinary, although the men were excessively indignant against their *own officers*, they invariably cheered those of the British who happened to be present. They were immediately marched off for Ciudad Rodrigo. Nothing could exceed the joy of the *Madridians* at our entrance.

The town was illuminated every night, the windows ornamented with every possible device during the day, and in short it was one continued gala. We had a magnificent ball on the 16th, at which I was almost

squeezed to death. They appear to consider Lord Wellington as a species of divinity.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Palace of the Escurial, August 22, 1812.
Received September 26.

I have to thank you for yours of June 29 and July 24, both which I received a few days ago. The latter I am happy to find gives a better account of affairs in England than the former, especially as to crops, which at this time really appears a most important consideration. However, now we have submitted so completely to America perhaps the Yankees may condescend to bring us a little of their superfluous flour. I cannot say the accounts from the northern counties at all set my mind at ease, or convince me that somebody is not behind the scenes in all these organized proceedings.

I wish most sincerely that we had some more decided home physician than the Doctor,[1] whose medicines will I fear be hardly strong enough to *purge* Yorkshire, &c. sufficiently. For my own part I am fully convinced that copious bleeding is absolutely necessary. I shall be curious to see the effect of the revocation of the Orders in Council. As for the Catholics, they appear determined either to cut their own throats or ours: I hope the former.

You will see by the dispatches which of course accompany this mail, that we have been going on very tolerably since my last. We marched into Madrid on

[1] The nickname of Lord Sidmouth.

the 14th, just in time to witness the surrender of the Retiro, the garrison of which were the finest body of men I have ever seen. Although drunk (having broken open a store of spirits as soon as the Capitulation was signed) it is a curious fact that the whole of them invariably cheered all the British officers who were present, and said they considered it an honour to be taken by us, whilst, on the contrary, their behaviour to the Spaniards was so violent and insulting that it was with considerable difficulty we could prevent the latter from falling on them. Indeed several were severely wounded and some killed.

It is impossible to conceive any two nations who have a more violent antipathy to each other, which to be sure is not very wonderful. Our reception at Madrid (which is a most beautiful and magnificent town) was most enthusiastic. The houses were hung with silk and gold curtains, &c. during the day, and the illuminations at night were superb.

In short nothing could surpass the magnificence of the spectacle. The ceremony of reading the new Constitution, celebrating High Mass and singing Te Deum was very striking.

The capture of Guadalazara and the abandonment of Argobispo, Talavera, and Toledo, renders our position at Madrid perfectly secure; while the united force of General Clinton and Santocildes is, I conceive, quite competent to keep Marmont's late army in check, although Clausel has pushed his advanced posts to Valladolid, in hopes of making a diversion in favour of Joseph Buonaparte. Some cavalry has, however, moved up to support Clinton, who occupies Olmeida and

neighbourhood, and I have no idea of anything serious taking place. As soon as the Sicilian army commences its operations, Soult must determine on something decisive, and either abandon Andalusia, Seville, and Cadiz, or try the event of a general action. The plan of incorporating Spaniards in *our* regiments seems to be laid aside; why I know not. The stores captured at the Retiro are fully equal to the equipment of from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and this number there surely ought to be no difficulty in finding at once, and the greater part might be old soldiers, who, under Lord Wellington, would be a match for at least *half* their number of French. The guerillas swarm, and if they are good for anything must plague the enemy most completely. This is so good a position that I think we are likely to remain here some time. Head-quarters are at Madrid, with the 3rd and Light divisions; and the 1st, 4th, 5th, and 7th, are in this palace, which is one of the most immense piles of masonry (though without taste or beauty) in existence.

In fact after the King's palace at Madrid, there are very few things of this sort in the world worth seeing. It is, I believe, by far the most superb, both inside and out, in Europe, and Lord Wellington, who has seen almost every palace in Europe and Asia, declared himself lost in admiration of it. A few days more will I trust make a considerable difference in our sick list, as the greater part of our invalids are merely over-fatigued. The weather is most intensely hot, which makes our being under cover (a luxury we have not experienced for nearly three months) doubly delightful.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Palace of the Escurial, August 29, 1812.

My dear Lord,—I have nothing worth relating to inform you of from this part. Everything goes on well, Bonet has moved down with the remains of Marmont's army, and begins to be impertinent.

We march to-morrow morning from hence, where we have now been ten days, to reinforce General Clinton, who is at Olmeida.

I do not imagine Bonet will wait for us, if he does we will give a good account of him. The idea seems to be that Lord Wellington will move to the southward and attack Soult, who will be in an awkward situation.

The Spaniards are recruiting fast. All Joseph's Juramentadoes have deserted and he is gone off post haste to Saragossa. I should not much wonder if some of the guerillas lay hold of him. Head-quarters still remain at Madrid, where there are two divisions, and a third marches from hence in that direction to-morrow.

MR. ROSS TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Avon Cottage, September 3, 1812.

I met Mr. Canning at Ringwood on Monday. He walked over to the cottage with me, and I never saw a person more struck with the beauties of a place than he seemed to be with all he saw, both inside and out. He did not stay at the cottage more than half-an-hour, for Mr. Dent sent his horses to meet him at Ringwood, as he (Mr. Canning) was desirous of taking Heron Court in his way.

Lord Fitzharris and he did not, however, meet, and this is the only regret I have on occasion of his visit, since it was in some measure my fault that they missed each other.

Lord Fitzharris was fishing on the morning that I put myself into Mr. Canning's carriage to accompany him to Heron Court. When we got to Hurn Bridge I learnt to my great mortification that Lord Fitzharris had not returned, and it was then too late to wait for him. With respect to myself, your Lordship will, I am sure, be pleased to learn that I found Mr. Canning exactly the same as he was four years ago, when we used to walk together from Bruton Street to the Foreign Office. He did not say much on the *early* negotiations of this year, as he said the whole was in print. With respect to the late one, his version was different from that Mr. Rose sent your Lordship, though in fact coming to the same conclusion. Mr. Rose said the negotiation broke off on the terms not having been sufficiently 'precise,' whereas the real cause of its ending as it did was the *precision* with which Lord Castlereagh explained himself. When Lord Castlereagh understood that a negotiation for Mr. Canning's return to office was on the tapis, his lordship desired Lord Liverpool to express to Mr. Canning his wish for a personal interview with him.

This Mr. Canning at first declined, on the ground that any discussion between them on the subject of his return to office would be embarrassing to both, and therefore that the *terms* would be better settled between himself and Lord Liverpool; but receiving an assurance from the latter that Lord Castlereagh's wish was merely

personal, Mr. Canning immediately waived his objection and called on Lord Castlereagh. His Lordship received him very kindly, shook hands with him and begged that the past might be forgotten. He then told Mr. Canning that so soon as he was informed of the wish of the Administration to have his (Mr. Canning's) support, he had made the offer of resigning the seals of the Foreign Department, and that this he was ready to do at any moment with the greatest cheerfulness. With respect to his situation in the House of Commons, he begged to assure Mr. Canning that had this question been an *open* one, he should not presume to put himself in competition with him; but that he would not conceal from him, that as the lead in the House of Commons had devolved upon him by the death of Mr. Perceval, he could not reconcile it to his own feelings to give way on this point. To this Mr. Canning could only make a general reply, and here the matter broke off, both parting as they had met, with professions of mutual good-will.

Mr. Canning told me that had this point been merely one of etiquette he would have yielded on it, but he felt it to be too important to be given up. The whole of what I have written is so highly creditable to Lord Castlereagh and to Mr. Canning, that I own I regret that some arrangement could not be devised for bringing the negotiation to a better issue. The Regent was anxious for it and offered Lord Castlereagh a peerage, which he declined. Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Canning had also an interview (it happened incidentally), when Lord Sidmouth took him by both his hands and assured him that he had been long desirous of having an opportunity of telling him that he was most anxious

'that all unpleasant reflections on the past might be forgotten, and that he was sincerely desirous of having him for a colleague.' The above was the principal part of our conversation. I relate it to your Lordship in strict confidence, and I am most anxious to learn your opinion on it.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Torquemada, about three leagues from Palentia,
September 13, 1812.
Received October 10.

You will see by the address on this, that my speculations from the Escurial have not been fulfilled. The fact is, that Soult, not liking his situation in the south, has moved without giving us the trouble of setting him in motion. Whether he intends acting on the offensive and moving on Madrid, or, *au contraire*, on the defensive and walking quietly off towards Valentia, remains to be seen. He is pretty strong, and will take a good drubbing before he is as tractable as M. Clausel, who we are *bowing* beyond the Ebro very leisurely. The Spaniards under Castanos and Santocildes have played us a pretty trick.

While Lord Wellington imagined they were marching on Burgos, at which place they might have been long before the French, and consequently have completely cut them off from the Ebro, they have made their appearance *ten leagues in our rear* at Valladolid, and of course might just as well have been at Corunna. Lord Wellington is half mad. Whether they are fools or traitors I know not, but surely nothing was ever more

thoroughly provoking. I am inclined to think the French have paid for this march, as Castanos is known to be the most avaricious man in existence. Had Lord Wellington's plans been but tolerably executed, we should have had but one army left in the Peninsula to contend with.

We are now moving slowly towards Burgos with the 1st, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions, together with General Bradford's and Pack's brigades of Portuguese and three brigades of cavalry, amounting to about 17,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry. Castanos and Santocildes have towards 24,000 infantry. You may, therefore, easily imagine the situation of the French, had they (the Spaniards) occupied a defensive position near Burgos, we being so near the enemy as to touch their outposts every day. Yesterday some smart skirmishing took place, in which the Guerillas behaved tolerably well.

The 3rd, 4th, and Light divisions are left to cover Madrid, to which place Hill is likewise moving, and must now be not far from Toledo. His whole force with these three divisions cannot be far short of 35,000 British and Portuguese, and to these you may add from 10 to 15,000 Spaniards, which ought to keep Soult's 45,000 in check.

We have lately experienced a severe loss in General Hulse, who died, I grieve to say, about ten days ago at Arevalo of a low fever. Those who knew him best will regret him most. I do not believe he had an enemy on earth, and as an officer he will not easily be replaced. General Wheatly died of the same disorder a few days before. We have had bad weather these

last three days, and I fear may expect more, which does not add to the delights of bivouacking.

I have been wet through for forty-eight hours, but am nevertheless perfectly well, and trust I shall continue so. We hear of several new generals, among whom is one I should be very glad to see—Paget. I hear General Cole is doing extremely well, and likely to feel no bad effects from his late wound, which, considering that the lungs were touched, is certainly fortunate. General Leith, I fancy, will go to England; Beresford is going on well. I suppose we shall have a disagreeable business with the castle at Burgos, which report states to be very strong. We have moved about two leagues to day on the road to Burgos. The French retreated yesterday.

Santocildes has arrived at Palencia, and will now I suppose venture to come on pretty close in our rear. He ought to be hanged in chains. This has been a good campaign, but nothing has given me so much pleasure as to see that there is English spirit enough left in the mob as to break Burdett's windows for not illuminating.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Burgos, October 11, 1812.
Received October 26.

I have delayed writing to you some days in hopes of being able to send you some satisfactory information from this abominable siege, but as there does not seem to be any probability of this being in my power for some time I will delay no longer. This is one of the longest jobs the noble Marquis has had in hand some

time, and, much as I *revere* him, I must say that in this case he has shown rather more of a quality nearly allied to obstinacy than is to be wished. The fact is that he was repeatedly told by those whom he consulted previous to commencing operations, his means (three eighteen-pounders, four howitzers) were totally insufficient, which has since proved unfortunately to be the case; and we have now, after losing between 1,600 and 1,700 men, still but a very dubious prospect of ultimate success, and that with the certainty of further very considerable loss of men. If we had had a few twenty-four pounders we might have taken the place in eight days, and probably with very trifling loss. You will see by the returns, that is if you get them, that we have borne our share in the killed and wounded.

The 1st and 6th divisions are the only ones employed. We are now established at the foot of the glacis, and are working hard, by mining &c., to effect an entrance into the body of the place, but as we have a double ditch both friezed and palisadoed to overcome, I do not think we can reckon on less than another fortnight's work. A deserter who escaped last night informs us that the garrison consisted at first of 2,200 men, of whom 500 are now in the hospital from wounds or sickness, but the remainder are fully adequate for the defence of the works. They are well supplied both with provisions, water, and ammunition; so that we have nothing to expect from *time*. The 5th and 7th divisions are in advance with the cavalry on the road to Miranda d'Ebro, and with the Gallician army (17,000) form a force fully adequate to keep Caffarelle in check, of which he appears to be con-

vinced, as he has hitherto shown no inclination to interrupt our operations. I cannot give you anything new from the south of Spain, as your information from that quarter must be much later than ours. Soult appeared from every account to have made up his mind to abandon every place south of Alicant, both in Grenada and Murcia, and I really should hope that if perpetual skirmishing takes place during the winter his forces will be so much diminished by that time as to render even the occupation of Valentia impossible. Everything must, however, depend on the Russian war. The French accounts from that quarter are rather alarming, but after their account of the battle of Salamanca it would be ridiculous to pay the slightest attention to them; and I trust that even if there should be any foundation for their assertions, it is not *one* defeat which would decide the fate of that country. I hope our ill success here will not make you all despond again. I trust the harvest turned out as good as most accounts represented, at all events it was an average year. Here it was most excellent, of which we now reap the benefit. We have never for a day failed in a regular supply since the commencement of the campaign, which, considering the rapidity of some of our movements, is paying no small compliment to our commissariat. Considering the severity of our service, and that we have had constant wet weather, and consequently *skins* for the last fortnight or three weeks, we continue tolerably healthy. General Paget arrived to-day and takes the command of our division, which will when joined by the 1st brigade of Guards (who are to be at Benevento on the

15th, and I suppose with us by the 25th) be the finest in the army. General H. Campbell will perhaps take this opportunity to return to England, which I believe *entre nous* Lord Wellington will *not object to*. General Stewart gets the 7th division. These are two valuable acquisitions to the general staff of the army, which since the ever to be lamented death of poor Hulse and the wounds of Generals Cole, Leith, &c. has been but bad. Sir S. Cotton has rejoined. Caffarelle made a show a few days back of moving round our right and threatening our communications with Madrid, &c.; but he seems not much inclined to carry this plan into execution, if he did his own communication with *France* might suffer.

I am very sorry Canning is not likely to come into office again, though after all that has taken place I cannot easily conceive him acting *very* cordially with Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth. I wish to heaven some really efficient mode of recruiting the army could be hit upon—20,000 more disposable British troops *might* at this instant make a material difference in the affairs of Europe. You will be sorry for poor Major Cox, who was killed in a sortie a few nights ago; he was the most promising officer in this army. He was the son of Lord Somers.

I shall now go and make a night reconnaissance of our work, and I will leave this open to give you the latest intelligence from this quarter. Owing to the superiority of the enemy's fire, two out of our three eighteen-pounders are completely disabled, their trunnions being knocked off. One of our howitzers has met the same fate; so that now we are reduced to one

eighteen-pounder and three howitzers; with which we cannot do much in the battering way. I am not very sanguine, though I trust we shall succeed by hook or by crook.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp opposite Tordesillas, October 31, 1812.
Received November 23.

I can easily figure to myself your astonishment at our late movements and operations, but the plain matter of fact is that our severe losses before Burgos, joined to the powerful reinforcements received by the enemy, has completely spoilt the *finish* of this campaign.

At the same time I am convinced that this grand effort on the part of the French to retrieve their affairs in the Peninsula will not be attended with anything like the success it at present appears to promise, and indeed if we behave with prudence, and trust to time and starvation what we are too weak at present to effect by *vive force*, this very effort will perhaps render our success more complete. These two grand armies, before whom we are obliged to retreat, are in fact exactly in the situation of the army of Portugal in 1810, viz. in possession of the ground they occupy and nothing more. They are surrounded on all sides by irregulars of every kind and description, and unless they can strike some grand blow by this concentration, their armies will soon begin to melt away most rapidly.

As for operations before Burgos, I fear we must not boast much. What possible motives could have determined Lord Wellington to persevere so tenaciously in a siege when his means were totally inadequate, and

to incur daily such a certain loss, with so very faint a prospect of success, I shall not pretend to decide. Certain it is, however, that no operation since the commencement of his command has so little contributed to raise his character, which, was it not established on so firm a base, would have suffered severely. Our division, and particularly the brigade of Guards, has to lament the loss of many excellent officers and men, and I fear that since we crossed the Douro in September we have lost not less than 4,000 of our best troops *hors de combat.* This is more than we can well afford, especially as we have nothing to show for it. The movements during our retreat have been ably conducted on both sides, though from their very superior cavalry I think the enemy might have pressed us more closely had they been active. We have now a tolerably tenable position, with the Douro in our front, though the enemy certainly have it in their power to cross if they like, but some little risk must be incurred in the operation.

Their army is I believe about 32,000 infantry and from 4,000 to 5,000 cavalry; the whole in excellent condition. To oppose this we have some 11,000 British and Germans, 8,000 Portuguese, and from 10,000 to 12,000 Spaniards, forming a most curious mélange of near 30,000 infantry. To which you may add 1,500 British and German cavalry, and from 800 to 1,000 Spanish. The small proportion of British would render an action, except under particularly favourable circumstances, an event far from being wished for. Although the Spaniards have in one or two small affairs really shown more good conduct than they are usually in the habit of displaying, they cannot as yet be trusted

with any operation of the smallest importance and are simply *for show*. They have a very well-appointed corps of horse artillery, but as they have never yet been engaged I cannot speak to anything beyond their appearance. We have had, as you may suppose, severe work during the last six weeks, which have been the most harassing I ever experienced, and I must do the army the justice to say they have borne it with great good humour. The weather has been wet for about half the time, but I hope we may now expect a change. Whether we shall be able to maintain our present position or be obliged to retire to Salamanca I cannot pretend to determine. Our great inferiority in cavalry is the greatest evil, and enables the enemy to manœuvre with security. Part of our reinforcements, the 91st regiment and 250 men for this brigade, which are on the march from Corunna, will be placed in rather an awkward situation, and may be obliged to retreat into the north of Portugal. I do not think Lord Wellington will give up Salamanca without an action, and the remembrance of the last in that neighbourhood may perhaps tell in our favour. We are all highly pleased with our new second in command, Sir E. Paget, who has our division, which, since the junction of the 1st battalion of the 1st Guards, is the finest in the army. Lord Dalhousie is appointed to the 7th. Generals Oswald and Barnes have joined, but I have not yet heard what their appointments are. We have had good practice in blowing up bridges of late, and, setting patriotism aside, I am not sorry to have had an opportunity of seeing a retreat of this description, which has afforded to a military man much useful information.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Mongualde, December 8, 1812.

On August 19, the 1st, 5th, 6th, and 7th divisions moved to the palace of the Escurial, Madrid, for the purpose of being quartered there, having previously bivouacked in the gardens of the Casa del Campo. This splendid edifice is capable of containing at least 10,000 men, and is perhaps one of the largest buildings in Europe, but excepting in that particular is little worth seeing. The Mausoleum is the only exception, which, being entirely composed of different sorts of marble, some very valuable, is when lighted rather fine. It is, however, too small to be called magnificent, having only room for twelve coffins, of which eight are *occupied*. The country and roads in the neighbourhood of Madrid bear ample testimony to the activity of the guerillas and the disagreeable life the French must have led. Every village was converted into a fortress; half the houses pulled down and the remainder fortified in every possible way. Nothing particular occurred during our stay at Madrid.

On September 2, we marched to Arevalo, where Lord Wellington passed us, and we then found that the siege of Burgos was determined on if the enemy chose to retire, or a *battle* if they did *not*. We crossed the Douro on the 6th, and nearly surprised the enemy at Valladolid. Unfortunately the 4th division lost its way, and Lord Wellington was unable to attack without it.

General Clausel retired during the night and crossed the Pisuerga, the bridge over which being destroyed brought us to a halt. Lord Wellington had arranged that the Gallician army under Castaños should be at Palencia on the 8th, which would have placed General Clausel in a very awkward situation. As usual, however, the Spaniards were too slow, and instead of being at Palencia on the 8th, contrived to arrive at Valladolid on the 14th. This completely deranged all our plans, and gave the enemy ample time to make his arrangements.

Castaños joined us at Buniel on the 17th, and an attack was planned for the following morning; the enemy however retreated and crossed the Arlanzon at Burgos. On the 19th we forded the Arlanzon and encamped on the right bank near the Castle of Burgos; the 6th division occupied the side next the town, and the 4th and 7th formed a covering army and were pushed on a couple of leagues towards Pancorbo. The fort of St. Miguel was carried by storm the same night after an obstinate resistance, and the Castle of Burgos completely invested; Major Pierrepoint, our Quartermaster-general, was killed and nearly 300 men *hors de combat.* We made sixty prisoners and killed about the same quantity; Major Cox particularly distinguished himself.

On gaining possession of St. Miguel, it was quickly discovered that the works on the opposite hill (about 250 yards distant) round the old Castle of Burgos were uncommonly strong, consisting of a double and in some parts of a triple line of defences. The French had bestowed considerable labour on them, and had con-

verted the old Roman works into modern ones. The site is uncommonly strong; the hill being of a *conical* shape, surrounded by a double *fosse*; the castle loop-holed, and a battery of seven guns on the top; the ramparts also were well furnished with artillery, and it was evident that they could bring seventeen or eighteen guns to bear on any point that we might erect a battery on.

The garrison consisted of 2,500 picked troops, and were well supplied.

To oppose this, we had *three eighteen* pound and *four twenty-four pound carronades.*

Lord Wellington was determined nevertheless to attempt the siege, and trenches were accordingly opened.

A very heavy fire of shot and shell was kept up from the castle, and we lost numbers every day. The duty came round pretty fast, and *we* (Coldstream) were generally in the trenches every *third* day. An attempt was made on the night of the 23rd to take an out-work near the bottom of the hill by escalade; this failed, and poor Frazer was badly wounded and a considerable number of men lost. Our batteries opened on the 27th, but were almost instantly silenced by the superior fire from the enemy, and two out of our three eighteen-pounders rendered unserviceable. Finding we had not a hope of success this way, it was determined to try the effect of *mining*, and approaches were accordingly carried on to within a few yards of the bottom of the wall which had been attempted to be escaladed on the 23rd, and a mine was commenced to blow up a part and effect a breach. The first attempt

failed, but the second succeeded, and the 24th regiment carried the outwork in very good style. The enemy made a most desperate sortie the following evening, and drove us from this post with great loss, but reinforcements coming up we again re-established ourselves, and mines were now commenced in several points.

As final success, however, appeared every day more and more doubtful, an attempt was made to set fire to a chapel within the works by *red-hot shot*, but this likewise failed entirely.

The enemy made repeated sorties, which almost always succeeded and threw us back considerably as well as causing a serious loss. In one of these sorties poor Major Cox, who had so often distinguished himself, was killed.

On October 17, positive information was received of the advance of the French, commanded by General Souham, who had collected an army of 35,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, and on the following day a last and most desperate attempt was made to carry the place by storm. This also totally failed, and our loss was severe.

Poor Harvey and Burgess of the Coldstream were killed, and Walpole and Crofton were wounded. All hopes of success being now evidently at an end (which had indeed been the opinion of many from the first), Lord Wellington gave up the attempt and united the whole army near Hormillas on the 20th, having been just one month before Burgos, and having *expended* in that time upward of 2,400 of the best troops in his army by *fire alone*, besides as many sent to the rear through the severity of the service, being entirely

without shelter and the weather extremely unfavourable.

We assembled on the strong position of Hormillas about 12,000 British and Portuguese and (Longa's corps having joined) towards 14,000 Spanish infantry.

Our cavalry did not much exceed 2,500. With this force (especially as Soult was advancing on Madrid, with a superior army to General Hill's) it was evident we could not attempt to contest the point with General Souham, whose army was in the best possible condition. We therefore broke up quietly after dark on the night of the 21st. The British marched one column through *Burgos*, and crossed the Arlanzon by the bridges in that town within musket-shot of the castle, and strange to say, although there was a full moon and it was an uncommonly clear night, without being discovered, owing principally to the shadow of the houses being thrown on the bridge at the time we passed.

The enemy did not discover our retreat until the following morning.

After a most fatiguing march of seven long leagues, on the 23rd we reached Torquemada late at night, the whole army being extremely fagged. Here unfortunately were numerous wine cellars, which some straggling Spanish and Portuguese soldiers broke into, and brought quantities of wine into the camp which was sold for next to nothing.

It being midnight before the messes were cooked, the effect of the wine on the harassed, wearied, and empty soldiers was instantaneous, and some hundreds were brutally intoxicated and utterly incapable of marching the next day.

On the 24th we took up the strong position of Duinas, and having destroyed the bridges over the Carrion and Pisuerga showed front there on the following day, in the course of which the enemy having discovered a ford near the village of Duinas passed over some cavalry and infantry, and a severe skirmish took place, in which they were driven back into the river by the 4th division, who suffered a good deal. On the 26th we crossed the Pisuerga and took up a nearly unattackable position at Cabeçon.

We broke up from this on the 29th and on the 30th took up a position on the left bank of the Douro opposite Tordesillas, and batteries were thrown up on the following day to prevent the passage of the bridge. In the meantime General Hill had evacuated Madrid and joined us on November 4. This, however, exposed our communications with Rodrigo to Soult, and it became necessary to retire, and on the 9th we accordingly occupied our old position on the heights of San Cristoval near Villares. Soult and Souham having formed a junction, the whole force opposed to us being then upwards of 90,000 effective under the immediate orders of Joseph Buonaparte assisted by Soult. The allied army under Lord Wellington amounted to about 70,000, everything being included in this number, but extremely fatigued and very deficient in cavalry we were not in a state to make a general action desirable. Lord Wellington, however, determined on defending the position of San Cristoval, and we remained there until the 13th, when the enemy crossed the Tormes near Alba de Tormes, and having thus turned our right, the old position of the Arapiles was taken up and battle

offered. Soult was, however, too wise to risk the result of a general action and contented himself with detaching some of his superfluous cavalry to threaten our communications with Rodrigo. We were consequently obliged again to retrograde, and on the 15th we commenced our retreat to Rodrigo, being closely followed up by the enemy.

The weather was miserable and the roads in consequence wretched; the troops suffered considerably till our arrival on the Agueda on the 19th, where the campaign ended without any serious loss in this long retreat. The troops went into cantonments for a short time to recover from their fatigue, and were then dispersed into permanent winter quarters in the neighbourhood of the Estrella and in the valley of the Mondego; and thus ended the campaign of 1812, in the course of which the brigade of Guards marched nearly 2,400 English miles, served at the sieges of Rodrigo and Burgos, were engaged in the battle of Salamanca and in several skirmishes. We reached this place, Mongualde, on December 6, and have got very tolerable cantonments.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mongualde, Portugal, December 10, 1812.
Received January 8, 1813.

It is so long since the date of my last that I am quite ashamed to say from whence it was despatched, but the fact is, that during our late retreat *opportunities* did not offer, and since its conclusion I have had nothing to communicate worth the postage. The winding up of this campaign has no doubt disappointed

you all in England quite as much or more than it has the army here, as your expectations were probably higher.

Ever since our passage of the Douro in September a fatality has attended all our operations, which is, as you most truly say, entirely to be attributed to the 'cowardly and infatuated leaders with whom unfortunately Lord Wellington *must* co-operate.' He was first completely foiled by the failure of Castaños to perform his orders and march on *Palencia* in time to prevent or at least retard Clausel's retreat from Valladolid, which enabled that French army to retreat unbroken, and afford full time for every necessary preparation to be made for the vigorous defence of Burgos. Our *failure there* I fear we cannot attribute to any other cause than want of means, which *Lord Wellington alone* is responsible for. But the main cause of our retreat to this side of the Agueda was the positive refusal of Ballesteros to obey the orders of the regency and advance on Madrid so as to threaten the rear and left flank of Soult's army, a service which, while it must most completely have prevented the possibility of the enemy bringing their whole disposable force in the Peninsula to bear on us, might at the same time have been performed without the smallest risk to his own army, which was at that time between 20,000 and 30,000 effective, and by far the most efficient of any Spanish army in that country. Whether this conduct on the part of Ballesteros was the result of *pique* or of *treason*, God only knows, but its consequences have certainly been very serious and have spoilt in some measure the effects of otherwise one of the most

brilliant campaigns possible; at the same time it must be confessed that our situation now and this time last year are widely different. We have now Rodrigo, Badajoz, Astorga, and the whole of the south of Spain, and the Asturias, and with the exception of Santona, the enemy have not a single port from Bayonne to Valencia. Added to this we have completely destroyed the works at Madrid, Salamanca, Toro, Tordesillas, Zamora, Almaraz, &c., by which they were enabled to protect their communications and keep the guerillas in check, and those works which they cannot for want of guns re-establish.

Added to this, we have taken, killed, and wounded, not less than 40,000 of their best troops, besides the capture of from 1,800 to 2,000 pieces of artillery (an irreparable loss to them) and immense stores of different kinds.

We have, moreover, set at liberty a large Spanish force, and afforded them time and space for the reformation of armies on a better footing than they have yet had; and we have, beyond contradiction, proved to France and the world that an equal number of the best French troops are no match for us (at least under Lord Wellington). Taking all circumstances into consideration, I believe the most sanguine man alive would most gladly have compounded this time last year for the present situation of affairs; and I have no doubt that if Russia continues to act as she has hitherto done, there will not be a Frenchman south of the Ebro by May next. Excepting the severe loss in cavalry which we sustained on October 23, we have not suffered more than might have been expected, and was it not for the

misfortune of losing Sir E. Paget,[1] which we all most deeply regret, I should think we were tolerably fortunate. The whole army is gone into winter quarters; we are very comfortably off in point of cantonments, and have quite forgotten the fatigues of the last three months; in which probably this division has seen as severe service as often falls to the lot of British soldiers to encounter.

The weather has throughout been particularly adverse; during most of the time we were employed at Burgos it rained incessantly. It then cleared, and remained dry long enough to render the fords of the Tormes, &c. practicable (but for which we should now be quietly quartered in Salamanca), and then poured without cessation till we crossed the Agueda.

The state of the French army was, however, worse than ours; and I have no doubt their concentration, &c. did not cost them less than from 8,000 to 12,000 men. Mina has been active in the vicinity of Burgos, and with Longa has a force which the French have not the means of checking. The loss these parties almost *daily* occasion is enormous, and is of the most essential service. I suppose the army will be to a certain extent re-organised, and as soon as I hear the details you shall have them. The 1st division consists at present of the 1st brigade of Guards, General Howard; 2nd division, Stopford; and German legion, Low. Altogether we shall muster in a month or six weeks hence about 4,000. General W. Stewart (Lord Galloway's brother) has succeeded poor Sir E. Paget.

[1] He was taken prisoner in a charge of French cavalry on November 17.

He is, I believe, a good soldier and *a gentleman*. Our brigade does not at this time muster more than 900 effective, which is a sad falling off from our former quota. We are, however, expecting drafts, both from the hospitals and from England, and shall, I trust, be 1,600 by February. We have this year marched upwards of 1,700 miles; and you may form some idea of the severity of our services when I tell you that during that time I have lost *six mules*, who have all but one dropped dead from absolute fatigue (a tolerable expense for a poor man); and my case is by no means singular—the road from Salamanca to Rodrigo was literally strewed. We are allowed 100 dollars per annum to carry the camp kettles, &c., and no tolerable animal can be purchased under that sum, so that it is rather a losing concern. You will hardly believe that in the Coldstream there are only *four* officers who had stood the *whole* campaign, one of whom is your humble servant. The Russians seem to be acting most gallantly, and prospering accordingly. The present gleam of sunshine for the world in general will not, I trust, be speedily clouded. It seems impossible that Buonaparte can long support the enormous expense of men and money he is now experiencing both here and in the North, and the present situation of France clearly proves by what an uncertain tenure he maintains his influence even there. He certainly made all his calculations on beating the Emperor Alexander and not the Russian people, and I cannot but be astonished at the firmness of the latter. Something I should hope may be expected from the Swedes next campaign. My brother's letters almost persuade me that there is no doubt of Bernadotte's sincerity.

1813.

After the annihilation of his great army on its retreat from Russia, Napoleon organised another by immense efforts of genius and a grinding conscription in every part of his dominion. With these troops he made head against a host of enemies where he commanded in person, but his generals continued to be beaten in every encounter in Spain, where Lord Wellington commanded the allied armies of England and Portugal. At last the French Emperor was defeated by the Coalition at the great battle of Leipsic, fought on October 18 and 19.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mongualde, January 17, 1813.
Received February 11.

Although a letter from winter quarters is so dull and uninteresting a thing that I am really half ashamed to begin one, yet I cannot refrain from congratulating you on the glorious termination of the Russian campaign, and the prospect it affords to the world in general of a speedy liberation from the state of slavery so large a portion of it has been groaning under for the last ten years. The *complete* annihilation of the immense force which entered Poland last spring affords so fine an opportunity both to Austria and

Prussia to recover their independence, that one can hardly believe it possible they will not jump at it, and if they do it appears to me that Buonaparte's subjugation is certain, or at all events his reduction to that state in which alone a peace with France would be a happy event for England.

All our accounts from Madrid agree in representing Joseph as making preparations for an immediate departure; indeed, as the army in this Peninsula is the only one now left on which Buonaparte can rely, and as certainly it is not strong enough to stand the chances of another campaign without very considerable reinforcements, there does not appear to be any alternative left. Much must of course depend on the dispositions of the people of France, and if ever the conduct of a human being was calculated to inspire hatred and disgust it is that which the Emperor has pursued during the year; and the abandonment of the miserable remains of his army must, more than anything, lower him as a soldier in the eyes of the troops he still possesses.

How the French will bear a new conscription, which must of course immediately take place, remains to be seen, but at all events Buonaparte's invincibility is gone for ever. He has not only been out-*fought*, but both in the cabinet and in the field out-*manœuvred*, by men who heretofore certainly did not stand foremost on the list of tactitians.

Those only who have had some experience in war can form an adequate idea of the horrible suffering and losses the retreat from Moscow must have occasioned, and if (which still appears doubtful) some 50,000 or 60,000 men should effect their escape, they will die

like rotten sheep, and not one tenth part will probably ever be effective again. The change which these successes will effect in the minds of the discontented in England, is one of the not least important consequences, and I trust we shall hear no more of *Luddites*, &c., and Burdett and Co. may howl and prognosticate in vain. I conclude we shall have some specious propositions for peace ere long, but thank God the age for humbug is past, and I trust there is very little chance of Talleyrand, or any other man's, effecting by negotiation what Buonaparte with half a million of soldiers has failed in. I wish I could give you a good account of our affairs here, but I grieve to say we feel the effects of the last severe campaign very seriously, and have buried numbers of those who it was hoped a few weeks' rest would render as effective as ever. Very few constitutions will stand for more than a certain time the extremes of heat and cold which constant bivouacking subjects the troops to in this country, and I fear we shall not take the field by many degrees so strong as we flattered ourselves a month ago. Our brigade is cruelly reduced, we scarcely muster 900 effectives, and are falling off every day, and I fear our case is by no means singular.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mongualde, February 14, 1813.
Received March 9.

We marched on two days of successive frost, which prevented my writing at that time, and on our arrival here, I had nought but very old news to communicate.

Now, alas, I have nothing but a melancholy account of sickness and death to send you. The mortality in our army is beyond anything ever known in this or any other country. The deaths for the last six weeks have averaged more than 800 per week, and are rather increasing than otherwise. Our non-effectives exceed 25,000, whom we could not bring into the field. British and Portuguese, more than 34,000 (including Hill's force). The most extraordinary part of this lamentable state is, that those troops which have lately joined and gone through no hardships of any kind are even more sickly than those who have served the whole campaign. The first brigade of Guards is nearly non-effective, and will not, I fear, be able to take the field this year. The Scotch brigades are still worse, and we are nearly as bad. What this is owing to, God only knows; our cantonments are very tolerably good, rations excellent, and clothing new from head to foot. The prevailing disorder is a kind of low fever, which usually proves fatal in a few weeks. It is a most melancholy sight to see those men who have gone through the severest hardships with (in spite of Lord Wellington's letter) such hearty goodwill and spirit, sinking so rapidly, and without any ostensible reason.[1] I cannot refrain from

[1] Of this famous circular letter, Napier thus writes. In substance it declared, 'That discipline had deteriorated during the campaign, *in a greater degree then he had ever witnessed, or ever read of in any army*, and this without any disaster, any unusual privation or hardship save that of inclement weather, that the officers had from the first lost all command over their men, and hence excesses, outrages of all kinds, and inexcusable losses had occurred; that no army had ever made shorter marches in retreat, or had longer rests; no army had ever been so little pressed by a pursuing enemy, and that the true cause of this unhappy

writing a few words on the subject of this *same letter*, which has naturally raised in your mind, as it must have done in every other, but of those actually on the spot, the most injurious ideas of the discipline and internal organisation of this army. From the instant this tirade appeared there never was, from the highest to the lowest, but one opinion, namely, that it was *unjust* and therefore in the greatest degree *ill-judged*, and I have very good reason for believing that his Lordship would now give a good deal that he had never written it. It was, I have no doubt, composed in a moment of spleen and irritation, and without the smallest intention of its ever becoming public. He has always been accustomed to wind up every order with a

state of affairs was to be found in the habitual neglect of duty by the regimental officers.'

These severe reproaches were generally deserved, and only partially unjust; yet the statements on which they were founded were in some particulars unintentionally inaccurate, especially as regarded the retreat from Salamanca. The marches, though short as to distance after quitting Tormes, were long as to time, and it is the time an English soldier bears his burthen, for like the ancient Roman he carries the load of an ass, that crushes his strength. Some regiments had come from Cadiz without halting, and as long garrison duty had weakened their bodies, both their constitutions and their inexperience were too heavily taxed. The line of march from Salamanca was through a flooded and flat clayey country, not much easier to the Allies than the marshes of Arnus were to Hannibal's army . . . . On this occasion, the troops stepping ankle-deep in clay, mid-leg in water, lost their shoes, and with strained sinews heavily made their way, and withal, they had but two rations in five days. . . . . The soldiers were actually feeding on acorns, when their commanders supposed them to be in the receipt of good rations. The destruction of the swine may be therefore in some measure palliated, but there is neither palliation nor excuse to be offered for the excesses and outrages committed on the inhabitants, nor for many officers' habitual inattention to their duty, of which the general justly complained. . . . . Nevertheless Wellington's circular was not strictly just, because it excepted none from blame, though in conversation he admitted the reproach did not apply to the Light division nor to the Guards.

few *observations*, but on this more than any other, he might have mixed a few praises with his censures.

The proof of what he has attempted and risked with this army is the best answer to his assertions. Was it with an undisciplined and disorganized rabble that he ventured to halt for three days at Cabeçon and again at Tordesillas before an enemy more than double his own force, and to suffer the enemy to bring up every man before he moved? or was it at Salamanca, where he ventured with the same army to manœuvre in the face of, and almost in contact with, an army infinitely superior in every arm, but more especially in cavalry, to his own?

But the fact is *not* what he represents it to be. The army is *not* in the state he says it is, and the officers (as far as I have had an opportunity of seeing) are *not* either ignorant or inactive in their duty. But they are all most thoroughly disgusted and hurt at being represented in this light to their country after the severe service and (as far as depended on them) brilliant success of the last campaign. For it cannot be concealed or denied that the unfortunate failure at Burgos was owing to no one but the Commander-in-Chief, since he was repeatedly warned that his means were totally inadequate (which every drummer was aware of), and means pointed out by which ample supplies, both of battering guns and ammunition, might be obtained, and which advice was not followed till too late, and when upwards of 2,000 of his best troops had been wantonly sacrificed. No preparations whatever were made for subsequent retreat; the sick and commissariat were *not* sent off till the very morning we broke up from before

Burgos, and no precautions were taken to prevent the drunkenness which took place at Torquemada, and which precautions could only have been taken by Lord Wellington himself, since no one else knew he meant to halt there. Thus, greatly as I esteem our noble commander, and looking on him as I do as one of the greatest men *our* (or any other) country has ever produced, still I must confess this letter has much lowered him in my estimation. It bears very strongly the appearance of throwing from his own shoulders that *onus* which can with justice be placed nowhere else. This is I know the sentiment of the whole army, and I much fear that this unmerited and severe censure is calculated to create the very evil of which it complains, from begetting a sulkiness and ill-will in those who have done their best to deserve very different treatment. I have somehow or other written ten times as much as I meant on this subject, which you must now be completely sick of. The glorious successes of the Russians and the prospect the situation of affairs in the North presents, are indeed sufficient to make up for all our misfortunes. If Austria is not *really* besotted, Buonaparte may now be completely humbled, and have his wings clipped so close as to prevent him from again soaring to the height he was at fourteen months ago. The Prussians seem going on famously, and Alexander has a fine hold on the King of Prussia and Emperor Francis from being in possession of Poland. Here, from the causes I have before mentioned, I fear we shall not do so much this campaign as it was fair to expect two months ago; not that we shall be *hemmed in* by the enemy or kept quiet. Soult has despatched a strong

force to assist Suchet, who will now perhaps be able to make a stand against Lord William Bentinck.[1] I should not be much surprised if some forward movement was made on our part from Placencia, so as to threaten Madrid, which, if we were not so cruelly unhealthy, might have the effect of bringing Soult back again.

We understand that the Cortes have agreed to 50,000 Spanish troops being fed, paid, clothed, and officered by us.

This would be a great point, and I see no reason why they should not be fully as effective as the Portuguese.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Mongualde, March 22, 1813.

Every mail we receive from England seems to prove beyond a doubt the complete annihilation of the immense force with which Buonaparte entered Russia, and the utter impossibility of anything like an effective army being assembled for many months on the part of the French.

In Portugal every preparation is evidently making for the evacuation of all the country south of the Ebro, (excepting the fortified towns). Soult set out for France about a fortnight back, taking with him, however, only a sufficient escort to prevent the guerillas from changing his destination. Drouet (Count d'Erlon) commands in his absence.

[1] Lord Wellington, though he was permitted to retain the Anglo-Sicilian army in Spain beyond the period Lord William Bentinck had assigned for its stay, had not full command given to him. Lord William Bentinck and Sir John Murray, the latter of whom was operating in Valencia, were at cross purposes, and impeded one another.—Napier.

Soult is a great *thorn* out of Lord Wellington's side, as he is undoubtedly a man of most superior abilities. Toledo is, I believe, also abandoned, and in consequence General Hill has moved forward with his division to Placencia. Our cavalry is still in the rear, owing to the green forage not being yet sufficiently forward to allow of their moving into Spain.

We shall muster pretty strong in that arm this year, and I understand in very high order. We are now, thank Heaven, tolerably healthy again, with the exception, however, of the first brigade of Guards, who will not be able to take the field this campaign. They are now on the road to Oporto, where they will probably remain for some months.

I should think Lord Wellington will have from 50,000 to 60,000 infantry and towards 6,500 cavalry under his personal command, not including the Spaniards, and I have no doubt the French will have at least 200,000 troops of one sort or another to make head against, and we certainly have not more than 110,000 disposable, which, even allowing for the inferiority of the Spaniards, is fearful odds. The general opinion is, that our first operation will be the siege of Burgos, and this (in spite of our ill-success last year) if we have a proper train of artillery, which we certainly shall, will not be a work of much magnitude.

Santona and Pancorbo must also be regularly attacked; the latter is very strongly situated. These are the only places of which it is absolutely necessary we should make ourselves masters previous to crossing the Ebro, and I do not think we can hope to get possession of them all before the end of July, by which time the

new conscription will probably be sufficiently organised to admit of reinforcements being sent from France. So that unless the events in the North should put this out of the question, I think we may reckon on wintering this year in the neighbourhood of Burgos.

The Cortes at Cadiz have just turned out the Duque del Infantado and the whole Regency, and formed a new one with the Cardinal de Bourbon as President, whom report states to be nearly an idiot. The cause assigned for this change is the refusal of the ci-devant Regency to enforce the publishing a decree of the Cortes relative to the abolishment of the Inquisition.

Whether this is for the better or the worse time will discover, but the old Regency had certainly been very active in the formation of new armies, and in regard to Ballesteros and one or two other instances had acted with a considerable degree of firmness. The idea of taking 50,000 Spaniards into British pay and organising them like the Portuguese, seems to be quite at an end. Indeed the difficulty of procuring *bullion* must alone render this plan nearly impracticable.

All our late payments have been in guineas, and we are still four months in arrear.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mongualde, March 30, 1813.
Received April 20.

I again have to write from this place, but the extreme backwardness of the season and the impossibility of the cavalry being subsisted in Spain till the green forage is fit for use is the real cause of our present

inactivity. You will probably see by the Lisbon papers that the French are actually preparing everything for their departure, if not behind the Ebro, at least from their present positions. Soult *has* marched, taking with him, it now appears, more men than was at first believed. *Ten* men per company and a large proportion of officers from the armies of the south, centre, and Portugal, to form the basis of a new army in France, is the amount stated. This would probably be from 10 to 15,000 men, and weakens their effective strength considerably. King Jose has left Madrid and taken up his residence for the present at Valladolid, which is certainly more out of harm's way, and where the army of Portugal is collecting. Those of the south and centre occupy a cordon from Toledo to Avila. The three united amount to about 72,000, and are (excepting Suchet about 20,000) the whole disposable force in the Peninsula, as the corps in Catalonia and the north have quite as much and indeed rather more on their hands than they can well manage.

We are, thank Heaven, beginning to be tolerably healthy again, and some of the divisions muster strong. The unfortunate 1st Brigade of Guards is gone to Oporto, and will hardly be fit to take the field this year.

We are expecting Sir Thomas Graham to resume the command of this division. General Stewart gets the 2nd, which is at Placencia, and musters nearly 10,000 effective. General Picton goes to the 3rd; General Cole to the 4th; Leith to the 5th; Clinton the 6th; Lord Dalhousie the 7th; General Alten the Light. General Hamilton retains his old division of Portuguese,

and remains attached to General Hill's command, which is by this means about 15,000. Pack and Bradford's brigades remain unattached as before.

This is, I believe, the organisation of the infantry, which probably amounts to nearly 40,000 British and 25,000 Portuguese effective. Of the cavalry I cannot speak with as much certainty. The 4th Dragoon Guards, 9th and 11th Light Dragoons, are packed off, leaving of course their horses, and are no loss. The Hussars are not to be formed into one brigade, but distributed, which is quite necessary, as they would soon have gone to pieces if left to themselves. All the others are getting into high order, and will be between 6,000 and 7,000 effective. Sir S. Cotton commands. Long, Fane, Alten, Bock, Ponsonby, Anson, and Sir George Calcraft, have brigades.

Thus you see we shall take the field with a force which His Catholic Majesty Joseph will not like to face, and with the assistance of some 50,000 or 60,000 of our allies the Spaniards, I think we ought to find the clearing of every place south of the Ebro a work of no great difficulty. The Alicant army, though not very fit for active operations, will do extremely well as a diversion, and will prevent Suchet from playing us tricks.

Our principal operations will probably be sieges, and as this may be very easily foreseen I trust we shall have all the necessary appendages, and not fancy our heads are hard enough to make breaches without guns. If we can secure Santander or Santona it would be a wonderful advantage to us, and shorten our line very materially. The French are working at Burgos day

and night, and will, I fear, give us a plaguey deal of trouble there; the main difficulty will be the regaining possession of the heights of *St. Miguel*. When that is done, if we have a proper train of artillery, we shall soon tumble the Castle about their ears.

They are likewise strengthening Pancorbo, which must be our second job. Everything seems to be going on famously in the North, and if Dantzic be actually taken, which I can hardly credit, I shall expect to hear that the Russians are in Berlin and all the North of Germany in arms. These are really fine times, *we* may still live long enough to see France reduced to a moderate size.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Mongualde, April 27, 1813.
Received May 13.

Here you see we still are, but here I think we shall not be when you receive this. The army is, I believe, to be assembled in the vicinity of Rodrigo by the middle of next month, and we expect our orders to move about the 5th. The uncommon dryness of the season is the principal reason for our not taking the field before. The army under the immediate command of the *Marquis* will be very respectable: 45,000 British and Portuguese infantry and 6,000 cavalry, 12,000 Spanish infantry and 2,000 cavalry, making 65,000 *effective*. General Hill's corps consists of 15,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry British and Portuguese, and will probably move on Madrid, which place it will reach (they say) without opposition. Indeed it is confidently predicted that we are to have a quiet march to Burgos,

and at head-quarters they are speculating on the siege of Pamplona. Burgos, Pancorbo, Santona, and Vittoria must, however, be first taken, and some of these are tough morsels. One thing is certain, that reinforcements to any considerable amount, but especially of cavalry, cannot be sent from France for some months, and the drafts taken by Soult have very materially weakened Joseph's disposable troops. Lord Wellington is in great spirits, and extremely sanguine as to the result of this campaign. Whether we shall receive any real assistance from our worthy allies the Spaniards seems doubtful, they have *nominally* a large number of men on foot, but I fear it is but nominal; at all events they will serve to garrison any places we may take.

We have a story here of a corps of Russians being likely to be employed in the eastern provinces, but I should hardly think this will come to much. The want of *bullion* is one principal objection to a scheme of this kind, all our late payments have been in *guineas*.

A new corps is just organised which will be extremely useful in maintaining the discipline of the army, and to confess the truth it was much wanted; it is called the cavalry staff corps (*why* I do not know), and is on the model of the French Police Corps. Two troops, composed of select drafts from the different cavalry regiments here, are already complete. They receive higher pay, and have a distinguishing uniform; two more troops are to be raised in England.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Lamego, May 15, 1813.
Received June 17.

You will see by the address of this, that we have at length found the use of our legs again: we broke up from Mongualde on the 10th and arrived here yesterday by easy marches. We were to have crossed the Douro this day, but owing to the ferry-boats having sustained some injury in passing the artillery we shall probably be detained a day or two longer. We are to be at *Braganza* on the 24th inst., on which day the corps under the command of General Graham will unite. It consists of the 1st, 3rd, and 5th divisions of infantry and the brigades of cavalry of Generals Bock, Ponsonby, and Anson (the two former are heavy). I believe the brigades of Portuguese infantry of Generals Pack and Bradford will also join us.

This will compose a force of about 20,000 infantry and 2,200 cavalry, with artillery, &c. in proportion. We shall form the left column of the *Grand Army*. The centre will consist of the Light, 4th, 6th, and 7th divisions of infantry and the corps of *Castanos* &c., and will muster nearly 35,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry. General Hill's corps forms the right column, and consists of the 2nd and General Hamilton's divisions, about 15,000 infantry and probably 1,200 cavalry.

I suppose the Gallician army will unite with General Graham. Thus you see we are *going at them* in tolerable style. *This corps* will turn all the positions of Salamanca, Valladolid, &c., and will, I imagine, march

by Benevente on Burgos. So many rumours are afloat as to the present position and force of the enemy that I know not what to say on this subject.

They say that *Zamora* and *Toro* both contain large garrisons and have been considerably repaired, and that, including these different garrisons, *His Catholic Majesty* has assembled nearly 60,000 men in the neighbourhood of Valladolid. This may be pretty nearly the truth, but they will hardly be mad enough to wait for us, as the loss of a general action would, under existing circumstances, be inevitable ruin to them, whilst by quietly retiring behind the Ebro they will reduce us to the necessity of expending a large number of men in capturing the fortified places and they may take the chance of events in Germany. If Suchet's corps cannot make a stand in Valentia we shall have very easy work till the sieges commence. The army is in high order, and every department well supplied and arranged, particularly the hospital establishment, which has been wonderfully improved the last six months.

If Austria does really come forward heart and soul Buonaparte's utmost efforts would (one should think) be of no avail, as his means of resistance will be lessened in proportion as the number of his enemies increase, and every German in this way may fairly be reckoned twice over.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Tabara, *Spain*, May 30, 1813.
Received July 8.

We arrived at this place, which is about five leagues south of Benevente, early yesterday, and found a much

larger force assembled in the neighbourhood than we expected. The 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th divisions, the independent Portuguese brigades of General Pack and Bradford, and the Gallician army 12,000 strong, forming an effective force of upwards of 40,000 infantry, are now united. The cavalry consists of the Hussar brigade, the two heavy brigades of Generals Bock and Ponsonby, the light brigade of General Hanson, General D'Urban's Portuguese and the Conde de Penne Villemur's corps, in all about 5,500 *effective* and in high order. We are divided from the enemy by the *Esla*. They do not appear to have had good information of our movements, and are still (we hear) ignorant of so large a force being on this side the Douro. Their main body is at Medina de Rio Seco, and probably when everything is collected they will muster nearly as strong as ourselves. They still occupy Toro, Zamora, &c. In the meantime Lord Wellington has joined Hill with the Light Dragoons, the Spanish army under Castaños, and the remainder of the cavalry. His army must be nearly as strong as this. His head-quarters were expected to be at Salamanca on the 27th, but no information has yet been received of his arrival at that place.

General Hill marched from Placencia through the Puneté de Baños to Tamames. His corps is said to be in beautiful condition.

The French still remained at Madrid and Toledo, when the last accounts came away. If they do not take care those corps will be in a scrape, and will have to run for it. The Duque del Parque is moving on Madrid, his force is stated at 30,000, but I should think this

rather overrated, though it must be tolerably respectable.

The Spaniards with us were to drive the enemy from Benevente this morning, but I hear that the heights on the other side of the river are too strongly lined with artillery to make this feasible, and the bridge will of course be blown up.

There are, however, plenty of fords, and the operation of forcing a passage is by no means a difficult one. The idea is that we shall move so as *continually* to threaten their *right*, which must produce either a retreat or a decisive action.

General Picton is second in command, and General Bock commands the cavalry; both good hands.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Vittoria, June 25, 1813.
Received July 4.

From the time we left Tabara till our arrival at this place we *literally* have never halted one day or have had *more* than *one* opportunity of sending letters to England, and being now left here with a detachment to collect wounded, stragglers, &c., I know not when I may have the chance of sending this one; I will, however, keep it in readiness. It is so long since the date of my last that I hardly know where to take up the account of our late operations, and to say the truth, until the 21st they scarcely offered much room for description. There has I believe seldom been a more rapid movement on the grand scale than our advance from our winter cantonments. We broke up on the 10th of last month from near Viseu and have since marched nearly

130 *leagues* (520 English miles), with I might almost say perfect ease and leaving very few sick of any description. This may partly be attributed to the marches being well divided, but more particularly to our carrying tents instead of camp kettles, which preserved our men from the cold and unwholesome dews they formerly suffered so much from.

The 'Gazettes' will have fully informed you of the different skirmishes which took place, in which our cavalry so completely *cowed* that of the enemy that they kept latterly a most respectful distance.

From some unaccountable negligence the French had delayed repairing the horn work of St. Miguel's (which commands the castle of Burgos) so long that our quick approach compelled them to give up their threatened plan of *bringing us up* at that place. They had still, however, a most formidable position near Pancorbo which they chose to imagine must be attacked.

Lord Wellington here completely outwitted them. General Hill's corps was left in front of the said position, and the remainder of the army made a rapid movement by its left, and crossed the Ebro in the neighbourhood of St. Martin and Fuente Arenas before his Catholic Majesty or his generals could take any steps to prevent it. Their position at Pancorbo was of course no longer tenable, and they retreated with all possible expedition *viâ* Miranda d'Ebro on this place, making, however, some faint efforts to stop us in the difficult country between Medina and Orduña. In this they did not succeed, and the whole army was concentrated on the 20th within a few leagues of Vittoria.

So bad was the intelligence of the enemy that although the heads of our different columns were all in contact with their advanced posts on the 20th, they still fancied we could not be prepared for a general action for two or three days, and they were making preparations for a quiet retreat as late as eleven o'clock on the 21st. Their position was far from a good one, but it was protected by nearly 120 pieces of artillery, about 55,000 infantry, and from 6,000 to 7,000 cavalry. Our principal attack was on their left, made by General Hill's corps. Their artillery was well served, and of course did considerable execution, but nothing could be worse than the conduct of their infantry. The instant there appeared a prospect of coming to close quarters, they broke and spread over the hills and mountains in the most complete confusion. Fortunately for them, the nature of the ground was such that, except upon the high roads, cavalry could not act, and very few prisoners were taken. General Graham's column consisting of the 1st and 5th divisions, Generals Pack and Bradford's brigades, supported by the Spanish Gallician army under General Giron, formed the left wing of the army, and met with somewhat the same sort of resistance experienced by General Hill. Unfortunately for us (the Guards) this column marched alternately right and left in front, and this day as we were the latter the 5th division came in for all the honour and glory. The only resistance of any moment was made by the French artillery, who really behaved well and were mostly bayoneted at their guns. So complete a *smash* of artillery, stores, baggage, &c. has rarely been witnessed. The booty taken is immense. The military chest,

which was full of the late contributions, consisted of nearly 23,000,000 of livres, mostly in specie ; some of this was saved, but a good deal found its way into the pockets of the cavalry who took it, and the hussars in particular made large sums. Horses, mules, carriages, barouches, waggons, tumbrils, &c., in a most glorious and absurd state of confusion covered the face of the country round Vittoria, and afforded a scene which completely baffles all my powers of description. The pillage which took place you may easily imagine, and books, papers, linen, clothes, and furniture of every description and sort were seen strewed in all directions. Poor Madame Gazan, who had jumped out of her barouche and stuck fast in a field about a hundred yards on one side, had the mortification of seeing the whole of her wardrobe ransacked and dispersed in about ten minutes. Such Spanish guerillas as were lucky enough to be near proved themselves complete masters of this part of their profession, in which, however, to confess the truth, our men did not need their assistance.

In fact, excepting the passage of the *Beresina*, I should think a greater quantity of baggage, &c. has rarely been lost by any army. As to actual loss (barring artillery), I imagine ours is fully equal to the French, for we had to take all their positions, defended as they were by numerous batteries, and when the period arrived when their loss would have commenced, they ran so fast our men were unable to get up with them.

All the French officers I have seen complain bitterly of the complete anarchy and disunion which exists among the different French marshals and generals.

The army which has just suffered consisted of those of the south commanded by Count d'Erlon (Drouet), the centre by Gazan, and that of Portugal by Count Reille, the whole under *Joseph*.

All these had their different plans, and all were mutually jealous of each other. Jourdan, who is Joseph's chief military adviser and in fact commander-in-chief, is an old fool.

Thus it may be owned Lord Wellington had not a very difficult game to play. What will be the consequence of this success remains to be seen. Head-quarters are by this time very near Pamplona, and the siege of that place will probably be immediately undertaken, the possession of which and *Santona*, which must soon fall if seriously attacked, would enable Lord Wellington to detach a considerable force towards Catalonia. In the meantime Suchet will of course endeavour to do something, but his means are limited, and Sir John Murray must have nearly enough troops to keep him in check. Joseph's army is, *pro tempore*, *hors de combat*, and if he should be able to supply himself again with artillery, the morale of his troops is so completely destroyed they are not much to be dreaded.

The powder &c. which we have taken will wonderfully forward our operations against Pamplona, which is, I fear, an awkward place.

I hope we shall not meet with a second Burgos. Since our getting on this side of the Ebro our supplies have been very irregular, and we have been often three or four days together without bread. This will, I fear, soon lessen our effective strength.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Vittoria, June 28, 1813.

Not long after our arrival at Mongualde and getting settled in our winter quarters, a very serious fever made its appearance, from which we suffered considerably; about seventy of our best men fell victims to this disorder.

The first brigade of Guards suffered still more, and buried during the months of January, February, and March upwards of 700 men, and was rendered totally unfit for service.

The army in general was extremely sickly this winter in consequence of the extreme severity of the last campaign.

About the middle of March we began to recover rapidly, and were tolerably healthy again when ordered to move in the beginning of May.

On May 10, we broke up from Mongualde and marched by easy stages to Lamego. The weather was rainy, and when crossing the Sierra de Narva extremely cold. We reached Lamego on the 14th; it is most beautifully situated, but one of the dirtiest towns in Portugal. I found my old sergeant François here, well established and possessing nearly the best shop in the town. On the 17th we crossed the Douro in boats, the embarkation being very well arranged; the road from Lamego to the river was very good, and the views magnificent. Next day we came to Villa Reale, which is a most curious and excellent town. The *natural moat* round the old town was the most wonderful and

beautiful I ever saw. On the 25th we entered Braganza after crossing a very mountainous country ; it is a large but very dirty town. We were joined here by General Graham's corps (the 1st and 5th divisions), and Pack's and Bradford's brigades. On the 26th we again entered Spain, and encamped for the first time this campaign, weather extremely hot and the march very fatiguing.

On the 31st we broke up suddenly at one o'clock in the morning to *force* the passage of the Esla. We were counter-ordered after having marched half a league and returned to Tabara.

We set off again an hour after and at last encamped at Losilla, the cavalry and two divisions of infantry having crossed the Esla near the ford of St. Euphemia, some by a pontoon and some swimming ; a few prisoners were taken by the 10th Hussars. We marched early the next morning, and after lying on our arms for about ten hours and being almost burnt to death owing to the want of arrangements in the Quartermaster-General's department, got over towards dark and encamped close to the water's edge. The first week in June we marched by easy but *constant* stages through the plains of Leon without anything occurring, or even seeing the enemy, who kept a day or two's march ahead of us. On the 8th we marched along the banks of the Royal Canal, which is here magnificent and in tolerable repair and nearly double the width of the generality of those in England. The roads were excellent, and as we got northward the weather was much cooler. We crossed the Pisuerga at Zargosa, and continued moving towards the Ebro.

The weather being really delightful, our marches though sometimes severe were extremely pleasant, and we derived the greatest benefit from the tents, which we now carried with us, and the number of those who were left in the rear was inconsiderable. We saw nothing of the enemy, who seemed to have given up all idea of disputing anything south of the Ebro.

Burgos was blown up and evacuated on the 11th of this month, owing it was supposed to the horn work on the heights of San Miguel having been unfinished and the palisades not ready. This afforded us no small joy, as it proved that our exertions and losses there last year were not quite thrown away. General Graham's corps, which consisted as before of the 1st and 5th divisions, the independent brigades with General Pack, and Bradford's and the Gallician army under General Giron, together with three brigades of cavalry under General Dick, amounting probably to nearly 30,000 men in all, formed the left of the *grand army*, and was destined to turn the right of the enemy on all occasions.

We accordingly marched over the mountains, and scrambled up and down precipices which appeared, at least for artillery, perfectly impassable. On the 14th, however, we reached the banks of the Ebro, at St. Martin, without any disasters, and the following day crossed at that place. This famous river was then so low that I forded it on a middle-sized mule without difficulty. We continued our route over the most tremendous and magnificent mountains, and arrived near Osma on the 18th, when for the first time this year we met with our old friends the French, who had taken

possession of a strong pass near that town, and seemed disposed to make a stand, and at first even to *attack us*. This determination on their part was, however, soon put an end to by Lord Wellington, who moved the Light and 4th divisions on their right, and attacked them in front with the 5th, while the 1st division threatened their left. They then went off as fast as possible, with the loss, however, of some men and a considerable quantity of baggage. The whole French army, under the immediate command of Joseph Buonaparte assisted by Marshal Jourdan, then concentrated in front of Vittoria, having the Zadorra for its line of defence, extending from the Pamplona to the high Irun roads, and covering both these and the town of Vittoria. This position was protected by nearly 200 pieces of artillery of all sizes, and from 60,000 to 65,000 infantry. Lord Wellington having reconnoitred on the 20th, attacked early the following morning, and turned both flanks at the same time and with equal success; the Zadorra was either forded or forced at all points, and by two o'clock P.M. the enemy were completely beaten and set off towards Pamplona, having lost the whole of their artillery, baggage, &c., and about 10,000 men *hors de combat*, of whom 2,500 were prisoners.

Excepting on the flanks very little severe fighting took place, and the brunt of the action was chiefly borne by the 2nd and 5th divisions, who composed the attacking columns on each flank. Our loss, including Spaniards and Portuguese (who both behaved well), was about 6,000. The fatigued state of our troops, and the impossibility from the nature of the country of using our cavalry to any advantage, saved some

thousands of the enemy. The number of guns scattered over the face of the country, together with tumbrils, waggons, carriages, &c., exceeded anything I ever saw.

The military chest, containing the whole of the late contributions and amounting to nearly one million sterling, also fell into our hands, and about half of this was plundered by the hussars and Spanish guerillas. Numbers of our light cavalry made very large sums, and instances were seen of hussars, after having exchanged their dollars for gold as far as they could, tossing up the remainder for the infantry to scramble for. The plunder of the private baggage was rather amusing, and some ridiculous scenes took place.

The Portuguese boys, and our butchers &c., were for some days going about clothed in French generals' full dress uniforms, &c. The fact was that the enemy were completely surprised, and had no idea of our army being sufficiently advanced to undertake any serious operations before the 23rd, and the only thing expected on the 21st was a strong reconnaissance. Nearly the whole of the *female* establishment of the French army was captured, which rather overstocked us with that article. Upwards of 3,000 *Mademoiselles* of various descriptions were left behind by the beaten army in Vittoria, to which place I was sent on the 23rd with a detachment of the 1st division to assist in taking care of the stores, wounded, &c.

Vittoria is nearly the best and most civilised town in Spain, owing probably to its having been quietly possessed by the French for about five years.

The shops are excellent and well supplied with every

article of luxury or necessity. The women of this town are handsomer and dress better than even those of Madrid.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Oyarzun, July 11, 1813.
Received August 11.

I wrote to you from Vittoria on the 25th ult., which I rather hope you received as soon as the dispatches. Since then I have again joined my regiment, and we are now occupying a strong position to cover the siege of San Sebastian, which is going on. The heavy guns, ammunition, &c., are landing from the transports at *Passages*, and as our means are ample, I hope we shall not make a second *Burgos* of it. The garrison consists of about 2,000 men, and the works are certainly strong, but if we get the town, which will not, I conceive, be a very difficult job, we may make the castle and heights *too hot to hold*. The 5th division (Pack and Bradford), and a corps of 3,000 Spaniards, are the troops employed. The siege of Pamplona is postponed for the present, and that place is to be strictly blockaded by the Spaniards under O'Donnel: strong redoubts are erecting for that purpose. Head-quarters are pushed on to *San Estevan*, and our advanced posts are actually in *France*. What think you of that? This place is about half way between Ernani and Irun (the last Spanish town on the Bayonne road). The French occupy the heights on the other side of the Bidassoa, and have destroyed the bridge and *tête du pont*.

They say Lord Wellington talks stoutly of moving

forwards, but I suspect this is *bully*. You will see that Sir John Murray has made a very pretty business of his part of the play. It appears that an advanced guard of 2,000 men caused so violent an alarm as to induce the abandonment of all the heavy guns, stores, &c. This is the more provoking as Lord W. Bentinck arrived a few days afterwards, but too late to prevent the misfortune. Whether this will make any alteration in Lord Wellington's plans, remains to be seen. By the junction of Clausel's corps, Suchet's army has become rather stronger than is pleasant, but he will not be very fond of trusting himself too near Lord Wellington. If Pamplona and San Sebastian should fall, the Spaniards ought to be fully equal to defending this road.

They are certainly improving, and if they had any officers would soon be equal to any troops in the world, but I fear it will take some time to form a tolerable number of the latter. This is by far the most beautiful and best cultivated part of the Peninsula we have yet seen. The road from Vittoria to this place is superb, provisions are in the greatest abundance, and of the best quality. We are of course well supplied.

The peasantry, and particularly the *female part* of it, are wonderfully improved in every point of view. They are, I think, even fairer than in England. The weather is wet, and has been so for the last three weeks. Indeed, I fancy it generally *rains* here ten months out of the twelve, and the other two it *snows*. At least, so say the peasants. We have, however, the consolation of seeing the French as well ducked as ourselves, and as we have tents and they have none, the joke is on our side. I trust we shall receive a few men from your side

of the water to complete our numbers, if you are not all thinking too much of Germany to forget what is passing here.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near San Sebastian, July 18, 1813.
Received August 15.

I have of late kept up so *hot a fire* on Heron Court, that you will, I suspect, be almost tempted to follow the example of the allies, and propose an *armistice*. I only yesterday received yours of *May*! The uncommon length of time was owing to the packet having gone to Lisbon. I agree with you in lamenting that —— did not again join us, but it has of late been a very usual practice to post those officers who are *supposed* to be near their promotion and in England to the 2nd battalion, which is, by the Duke of C——, considered as doing them a *favour*, as the *fashion* at present is not to consider seeing service in any way desirable, at least in *our* corps. Your sport in the Avon was really admirable and made my fingers itch; some of the rivers in this part are well stocked, both with trout and salmon, but we have just now *other fish to fry*. Since I wrote from Oyarzun, we have moved to this place, to assist in the siege of San Sebastian, which I am very glad of, as it promises to be both 'amusing and instructive.' Our operations have hitherto been much delayed by a convent in front of the town, which the enemy had rendered rather strong.

This, however, we yesterday took by storm in tolerable style, and without much loss. We shall now go on swimmingly, and I hope our batteries will be ready

to open to-morrow morning or the day after, at farthest. This is certainly a strong place, being situated on a peninsula (in the shape of a *battledore*) the end of which terminates in an extremely high rock. An old castle occupies the summit, and which has been rendered nearly unattackable in any way but by bombarding. The town itself, which is situated on the *neck*, is protected by regular works, but these are commanded from the convent we gained possession of yesterday, and we have established several powerful batteries which *enfilade* them very completely. The plan is, therefore, to *breach* and take the town by storm, and we must then try the effect of a *bombardment* of the castle, which being of small extent, and (I believe) not bomb proof, may be rendered *untenable*. Nothing can be more advantageous than our present situation. *Passages* is but a very short league from our batteries, and our heavy train has consequently disembarked there. It is quite delightful to find oneself again in the midst of English shipping, and to receive news from England of not more than four or five days' standing. We have now here papers of the 6th and 7th inst. The number of prisoners taken on the 21st ult., is *rather* exaggerated. Altogether we have about 2,000. I cannot say the Field Marshal's dispatch is particularly clear. It is, however, a fine contrast to Sir John Murray's. His late performance at *Tarragona* will not increase respect for him. We hear that the *Shannon* has taken the *Chesapeake* by *boarding*: I hope this is true, and that the *ice is broken*. We have also a report that the armistice has been broken, but I fear there is no foundation for this. Austria is indeed riveting her own chains, and those

of the world. Future ages will hardly believe that so weak, so dastardly a court could have made the efforts she formerly did. Buonaparte seems by degrees to be extricating himself from the hopeless situation he was in six months ago,[1] and this fully as much by the idle conduct and miserable policy of his enemies as by his own exertions. The Russians and Prussians have, however, fought well, and if Bernadotte chooses to act with vigour, the line of the Oder ought to be impassable. They say that Gazan's *corps d'armée* (*ci-devant* Soult's) has been ordered to Germany together with most of the cavalry. This does not look like any attempt to renew the contest here, at present.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Oyarzun, July 28, 1813.
Received September 7.

When I wrote last, I was in hopes that by this time I should have had to congratulate you on the capture of San Sebastian; this event, however, seems now to be postponed, *sine die*, and the idea is, that one of much greater importance will shortly take place. Soult is certainly preparing to make a grand effort to retrieve his master's affairs here, and before you receive this another, and probably a much more contested, *general action* will, I think, have been fought.

The position we occupy is extensive but extremely strong, and if the Spaniards collectively behave as well

[1] After his disasters in Russia, he raised a new army, and at this period presented a front of 700,000 men and 1,200 field-pieces, exclusive of the armies of Spain and his garrisons on the Vistula, Oder, and Elbe.—Napier, vol. v. p. 430.

as those corps did which were engaged at Vittoria, there can be but little doubt of the result. This, however, remains to be proved: they have now everything in their favour, and are, to appearance at least, fully a match for their enemies, and if they have not perfect confidence in the man who commands them, it is their fault and not his.

On the other hand, I cannot imagine that the French soldiers will re-enter Spain with any great pleasure, and I suspect one half would rather be beaten and remain in France than gain a victory to campaign again in this country. For my own part, I have but little fear of the utmost Soult can do; though undoubtedly a man of his abilities with an army of 60,000 or 70,000 good troops is not to be despised, and I should be better pleased if I saw a few more *red coats* in *our army*. We are better hands at carrying on operations in the *field* than in the *trenches*, a fact that was never more fully exemplified than in the siege now going on, or perhaps I should rather say *given up*. With the most ample means of every description, we have somehow or other contrived *to fail* at San Sebastian. What this is owing to it may appear presumption in me to determine,[1] but certain it is, that a more absurd want of every common arrangement than was exhibited in the attempt to storm the breaches three days ago, never took place. It was to have been done at *low water*, when alone it could possibly succeed, but instead of this the signal was given for the party to advance at least one hour and a half

[1] For the causes, *vide* Napier, vol. vi. p. 82.—Five officers of engineers, forty-four officers of the line, and 520 men fell dead or wounded in this unsuccessful assault.

too soon, added to which it was perfectly dark, and no orders having been communicated to the batteries or any signal agreed on, our guns continued playing on the breach while our men were attempting to get in, and I believe that one half of our loss was caused by our own fire.

Sir Thomas Graham[1] had the entire command. We had about 400 of our best troops thrown away in this attempt.

Our total loss during the siege already exceeds 1,000, and we are no nearer now than at first. The guns are now re-embarking, and the place is to be *blockaded!*

We have destroyed about half the town, which our worthy allies will not thank us for. The garrison have nearly nine months' provisions, and can moreover be supplied during the night by means of boats from Bayonne, so that we are not likely to *starve them out.* This is something like Burgos; but I trust the resemblance will not extend further. Soult's great object will naturally be to relieve Pamplona, where the garrison will soon be distressed for provisions, having not more than sufficient for six weeks left. The real attack may therefore be expected on our right; a smart skirmish actually did take place there yesterday, in which a point of some importance, the *Puerto de Maya*, was given up by us, owing (they say) to a *mistake of Sir R. Hill's*; but he is not apt to make *mistakes*.[2] It is

[1] Afterwards Lord Lynedoch. Napier calls him 'One of England's best soldiers.' He did not adopt the profession until after he was forty years of age, upon the death of his wife. He was about ninety when he died.

[2] Napier attributes the loss of the battle of Maya to General Stewart's want of precautions. Vol. vi. p. 123.—This pass was only forced by the French after the most desperate fighting against overwhelming odds. The 92nd regiment lost two-thirds of its men without retreating.

to be retaken if possible. Clausel has rejoined Soult, and they are now stronger than on the 21st ult. We have, however, this time the advantage of position, and we may safely trust to Lord Wellington to make the most of it. We hear that some drafts are expected from England, they will come very apropos. We hear nothing from Germany. I fear the armistice will be renewed, though the King of Prussia's manifesto looks well.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS

Camp near Oyarzun, August 5, 1813.
Received September 7.

As there seems some chance of this being in time for the Prince of Orange, who is going to-night with dispatches, I will write a few words to congratulate you on the success which has attended Soult's late operations. The 'Gazette' will of course give you a much better account than I can, not having been within some leagues of the scene of action. From all the accounts of those who were there, it was at first a very *near thing*, and after forcing the *Roncesvalles* pass, where the 2nd division were surprised, Soult thought himself so certain of success that in an *order of the day* on the morning of the 20th, he pledged himself to the army to be in *Pamplona* that night and to keep the *Emperor's* birthday at *Vittoria*. He had collected nearly 50,000 men for the first of these promises, and calculating on the great extent of our line, thought it quite impossible that Lord Wellington could collect a sufficient force in time to stop him. The unexampled steadiness of the 4th division, however, frustrated all his plans; they were

for some time opposed to 25,000 men without losing one inch of ground!

Very rarely has a more desperate attack been made or a more desperate resistance. The loss of the French from the 27th ult. to the 3rd inst., does not probably fall far short of 20,000 men *hors de combat.*[1] Of these we have about 3,000 prisoners, besides nearly as many wounded. After the failure of the attack on the 28th they were completely *cowed*, and no exertions of their officers could prevail on them to stand for a moment. In one instance the *light company* of the 40th (I believe) *cut off* a whole brigade, and detained them till the arrival of the 4th division, to whom they surrendered. Their loss in baggage, &c. rivals Vittoria, Drouet's (*ci-devant* d'Erlon), Gazan's, and a good deal of Soult's baggage been taken, together with a number of papers of consequence. A large convoy which was destined for Pamplona was seized, and another still larger destroyed by themselves. The different divisions have now re-occupied the same positions as before, except that General Hill is rather farther advanced. Mina[2] has joined from the neighbourhood of Saragossa, had he been up one day sooner the business would probably have been much more complete.

Lord Wellington in this last affair has out-done all his former out-doings. When on the 28th he rode up to the 4th division, who were retiring, and ordered them to face about, the men were so delighted to see him that they gave him three cheers down the whole

[1] For a most graphic account of these bloody contests in the Pyrenees, *vide* Napier, vol. vi. Book XXI. Ch. V.

[2] The famous Spanish partizan chief.

line (a very uncommon mark of favour from English troops), which alarmed the Spaniards so much that they took to their heels; they were, however, rallied, and some corps behaved very well.

We have lost nearly 6,000, killed and wounded; but of the latter many are slight cases. Poor Roveria, General Cole's aide-de-camp, is killed. General Pack's wound is a slight one. We hear from the French the armistice is prolonged till the 15th inst.; I would it were at an end. Suchet has taken up a position between Taragona and Merida, and I hear that Lord W. Bentinck is moving on Saragossa. We are expecting some drafts from England; we want them much. General Leith has arrived. The first brigade of Guards are to be here on the 12th. The siege of San Sebastian is to be recommenced; we must positively take it.

They say that Soult is declared Regent of Spain. Had he succeeded in his first attempt it would have been unpleasant.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Camp near Oyarzun, August 14, 1813.
Received August 30.

There is at present but little worth communicating from this part. Everything remains nearly in statu quo. The siege of San Sebastian is recommencing, and our batteries open again to-morrow. This place has completely puzzled our engineers, and I fear it will be a long time before we can hope to gain possession of it. The communication by sea with Bayonne is so easy, that, with the scanty naval force on this station, we

shall find it very difficult to entirely prevent it. Pamplona is strictly blockaded; the garrison are badly off for meat, but have bread sufficient for five weeks. I cannot conceive that a place of such primary importance will be suffered to fall into our hands without a vigorous attempt on the part of Soult to relieve it. A paper containing the terms on which Buonaparte *is willing to grant peace to the world* has just been circulated through the French army. Some of the terms are very amusing; we are to *give up Malta*, but to be allowed in return to *keep Sicily*; Ferdinand is to be restored, and Joseph Buonaparte to become King of Italy, Russia to have Wallachia and Moldavia, &c. It is evidently an attempt to persuade his troops that he wishes for peace on reasonable terms, and to rouse their resentment against the Allies. I should imagine, however, that stronger reasons than these will be necessary to persuade them of the wisdom of their attempting to re-occupy any part of the Peninsula. They are at present completely cowed, and nothing but some very brilliant success could set their *morale* to rights, and that I trust they are not likely to have this campaign.

The Spaniards are certainly improving in organisation and appearance, and will in time I hope be taught to fight a little, which at present they certainly are not always fond of doing. We hear that Lord W. Bentinck has crossed the Ebro and established his communication with Lord Wellington, who, I am sorry to say, has been indisposed for some days with a violent attack of lumbago. I trust, however, that this has not any way affected his health. It has been officially notified to the

German Legion that after this campaign they are to go to Germany, at which they are highly delighted. Most of our cavalry are gone into Navarre for the sake of forage. They can be but of little use in this part. They are quite recovered from the fatigues of the advance, and in high order. We have just received two months' pay in new guineas of 1813.

It is rather extraordinary that a small number of guineas was in circulation in the French army. Our army is now paid up to March last.

We are uncommonly well supplied, and while we remain in our present position there can be no difficulty on that head.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Irun, August 27, 1813.
Received September 17.

Our batteries have once more opened on San Sebastian, which place will, I conceive, be again attempted by storm in a day or two. If we succeed (which appears dubious) the garrison will be obliged to retire to the castle, from whence our engineers think they may be expelled by shells, and forced either to attempt a hazardous escape by sea, or to capitulate. For my own part I am far from sanguine on this subject.

The place is in itself extremely strong, and during the long interval of rest the garrison has lately enjoyed every means has of course been employed to increase the obstacles to an assault.

The 5th division are moreover much dispirited with

the ill success they met with, and the severe losses they suffered; not so the enemy, who are quite cock-a-hoop, and up to anything. The governor is a gallant and skilful man, and not to be bullied; in short, unless some lucky chance should befriend us, I have no idea of the place being in our possession for many weeks. Our naval means, however, are now more ample, and we have, I hope, a better chance of obstructing their communication with France than before. We have, as you will see by the address on this, moved rather in advance since my last, and are now within a mile of Irun, and hardly a gunshot from France. I can almost see into General Foy's [1] room, from where I am now sitting (quite with a glass). Everything is quiet on the right. Pamplona has still three weeks' provisions, which can be spun out to a month; and if not relieved before that time, the works will, I have no doubt, be blown up and the garrison make a bolt.

In the meantime we are all terribly down in the mouth at the idea of a general peace and at the prolongation of the armistice for another month, both which events appear but too probable.

I do not think this part of the position likely to be attacked, it would be a desperate business; but on the right perhaps something may be expected; we are, however, now stronger there than on the 27th, and the passes will not be surprised a second time. I had hoped that the day when I should revisit England was very far remote, but this abominable peace and still more abominable brigade, which somehow or other never is

[1] One of Napoleon's most celebrated commanders.

employed, will probably defeat those hopes, and I suppose I shall vegetate to a good old age as a very respectable half-pay captain.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Irun, September 16, 1813.
Received September 28.

I must now give you some account of affairs here, and answer your queries to the best of my power. Imprimis as to health? Extremely well. Supplies? Regular and good. Mutton, beef, biscuit, rum, wine, and vegetables in abundance. The Spaniards were for a short time badly off, but are now improving. Reinforcements? Arrive but slowly from England, but as a very large proportion of the wounded at Vittoria have rejoined, and as the Portuguese recruits are numerous, and large numbers of convalescents from the rear have, and are joining, I conceive we are nearly as strong as at first, and what we want in number (if any) is amply made up in *morale*. As to our allies they certainly have proved themselves considerably advanced in that very necessary part of drilling called *standing fire*; and although in the affair of the 31st ult., two battalions did run away from a fourth of their number, and allowed the French to establish themselves for a moment on the key of their position, yet the manner in which this was retaken by their reserve made up for it; and altogether, I am persuaded that a few more affairs of this sort will render them a very different description of soldier to what they have been found hitherto. They are certainly fast improving in appearance, particularly

the officers, and are by degrees organizing a species of commissariat, and another year will, I predict, make a material alteration for the better in every department. Their principal corps are thus disposed. The Gallician army, under Mina, are immediately in front of the 1st division, and occupy Fonterabia, Irun, and the line of the Bidassoa towards Vera, near which they communicate with Longa. These two corps amount probably to nearly 20,000, of which number two-thirds are very tolerable troops, and the remainder are improving. The next considerable corps is that under Morillo (a good officer), who has about 5,000. He was, and I believe still is, attached to Hill, and occupies a position near Roncesvalles. Mina, who has now between 13,000 and 14,000 excellent light troops, forms the extreme right of the army, and his head-quarters are at Sanguesa and Jaca. Giron has the command of the corps blockading Pamplona, which was between 10,000 and 12,000 strong, but I believe some part of that number have moved to the front; besides these, Don Carlos d'Hispana has a division of 3,000 or 4,000 men, but where they are I am not sure. Altogether they say Lord Wellington has about 60,000 effective Spaniards under his personal command, but this is probably including cavalry. The remainder of the army, British and Portuguese, are nearly in the same position they occupied previous to the advance of Soult on July 25, excepting that General Bradford's brigade of Portuguese, then at San Sebastian, have now joined the 4th division; and as soon as that place is rendered safe from a *coup de main*, the 5th division, and Wilson's (ci-devant Pack's) brigade, will probably move to the

same place. I am half inclined to quarrel with your calling the glorious success of the battle near Pamplona *indecisive*; you may rely on it that the result of that affair was of even more importance to the general cause than Vittoria. The loss of cannon &c., although of the greatest consequence when it cannot be replaced, is but a trifling evil to an army acting on their own frontier; and what rendered Soult's failure of such primary consequence was the absolute conviction in the French army that all their former want of success was solely to be attributed to their generals, and Soult was the man looked up to by every one as the only person to set things to rights. That illusion is now gone by for ever, and from every account no army was ever more completely sick of fighting than that one now is. Still, I do not think Pamplona will be suffered to fall without another attempt to relieve it; indeed, in an intercepted despatch from Soult to the governor of that place a few days ago, he promises to undertake something immediately. They have certainly been concentrating on their left, and making every preparation for some operation for the last three or four days. The garrison made a sortie a short time back, but I have not heard the result. Their provisions appear to grow, as they are said still to have enough for three weeks left. A considerable portion of our cavalry are expecting to move towards Saragossa, but I have not heard that any have actually set out. That part of the army is in high order, and stronger than they have ever yet mustered in the Peninsula, 7,000 British and German. You are rather severe on the subject of sieges, but I fear justly so.

We are certainly bad hands, but Sebastian was an awkward place, and was well defended.

Our loss there was upwards of 4,000, and of this number a very large portion are *hors de combat* for ever. The last storm was perhaps as desperate a business as ever took place. The breach was contested two hours and thirty-five minutes, and during that time we lost on that spot 2,311 men, of whom nearly one half were either killed or mortally wounded! The detachments from our corps lost about one half of their men, but were fortunate in officers, a son of Sir H. Burrard being the only one killed. He was a very fine lad, and the third Sir H. has lost within three years. Poor Chaplin of the Coldstream (a son of the member for Lincolnshire) still remains in hopes to recover and save his leg, but for some time he will be in a perilous state; two balls were extracted yesterday. The garrison suffered pretty severely during the siege. They were at first 3,300 fit for duty, and only marched out 1,300. Their protracted defence was in a great measure owing to their constant communication with France, which our (at first) scanty means could not prevent. I believe Lord Wellington made some pretty strong remonstrances on this subject, and the Admiralty have in consequence sent out Admiral Martin, who arrived the day before yesterday to know what is wanted. I met him at dinner yesterday, at General Graham's, and was sorry to find that so great a want of seamen exists as to be at this time a serious evil. We are all on the tiptoe of expectation and anxiety relative to the battle near Dresden.[1] Buonaparte's account of

[1] The Allies, commanded by Schwarzenberg, were totally defeated by

the business, though very confused, is still alarming. He does not, however, appear to have gained ground, and admits the forces of the Allies to be pretty numerous. I have good hopes of Bernadotte; Moreau, they say, will not have a command. I almost wish he had stayed quietly in America. His day is, I suspect, gone by, and like yourself I have no great opinion of French renegadoes. We are fortifying our position here at a great rate, redoubts, batteries, &c. without number. If Pamplona falls into our hands in its present state, Spain is safe. To hold our position by the right, leaving at the same time a sufficient force to keep our left in check, and secure communications, &c. would require at least 150,000 men, and the utter impossibility of feeding that number, even could they be collected, would alone render such a scheme impracticable.

It is certainly presumption in the extreme to pretend to look forwards to any distance of time, but if ever hopes might reasonably be entertained of reducing France to her original dimensions, this is surely the moment. Heaven grant it may prove so.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Camp near Irun, September 27, 1813.

Since the capture of San Sebastian we have been extremely quiet here, and are very busily employed in fortifying the principal passes on this side the Pyrenees.

This one by Irun will in a short time be a second edition of the lines at Torres Vedras, and nearly

Napoleon at Dresden on August 26. Moreau was killed fighting on the side of the former.

unattackable. In the meantime, preparations appear to be making for a forward movement, and the occupation of the line of the Adour is confidently predicted. A short time must, however, now decide this point. The rainy season usually sets in about the middle of October, and cantonments will then become necessary, but whether we shall look for these in front or in rear remains to be seen. Pamplona, or rather the garrison, is supposed to be in its last agonies. Another fortnight must I think decide its fate, and then Lord Wellington will undoubtedly be able either to detach against Suchet or move forward here, as he pleases.

The good people of Bayonne are extremely alarmed, as the fortifications of that place are being repaired with great activity.

The greatest anxiety prevails in the French army at present, owing to no news from Germany having been published of a later date than the 2nd, and they send to us almost every day for papers, &c. They believe that a general action was fought on the 4th inst., in which they were beaten, and that Buonaparte has deemed it expedient to retire behind the Rhine. If this be true, the fate of this campaign appears to be decided At all events Macdonald has been completely defeated in Silesia by Blucher, and Oudinot has had no better success with the Crown Prince. A few months more must now reduce France to a moderate size again, but while Buonaparte lives nothing like real security can be hoped for by any other means than arms. I only hope these successes will not lead to a second armistice, but I own I dread it. The account of the harvest and the fall in the price of bread in England is really delightful.

We certainly never stood higher than at this moment; the Austrian Manifesto, which appeared to me uncommonly well-written, is a convincing proof of this. I do not think Lord Wellington will be very much alarmed at the decree for raising 30,000 more conscripts from this part of France. The peasantry on the other side are by no means averse to the idea of a visit from us; in fact, till you cross the Garonne there is so great a mixture of Spaniards that you can hardly be said to be in France.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Camp near Irun, September 30, 1813.

I left Vittoria on July 1 with the 5th division to rejoin my regiment, which I found on the 7th at Ernani, and rode over the same day to San Sebastian, for the siege of which every preparation was being made, and the engineers said they should have the town in three days after the batteries open. The works, however, appear formidable, and the only means of attacking the castle is by shells.

In passing through Villa Reale I saw for the first time a bull-fight, which was given in honour of a famous Guerilla chief, Marquinez (El Pastor), who three years ago was shepherd to an inhabitant of that place, and at present is the head of a band of upwards of 3,000 guerillas. The said bull-*bait*, for it did not deserve a better title, by no means answered my idea of this national amusement; but this perhaps might be only occasioned by the inferior description of the bulls,

who seemed much more inclined to eat than to fight. On the 8th we marched to near Oyarzun, where we remained till the 17th, when we moved to Passages Abaixo and encamped within a mile of San Sebastian, for the purpose of assisting in throwing up the batteries on the north side of that place. The Convent of San Bartholomew was stormed just as we arrived on our ground; a former attempt had failed. The arrangements for the attack were thought but middling. The garrison behaved well, and it was now ascertained that a considerable number of them were our old Burgos friends. The commandant here (General Rey) was second in command there. We returned on the 28th to our former camp near Oyarzun, and the batteries opened on that day, but without the effect expected; and it now became evident that the defences of the place were not so weak as they were at first imagined to be. I rode over generally twice or three times a week to the siege of this place, which turned out a tough job. Our battery train, however, being ample, one would think we must knock down the defences in time. Our principal batteries were constructed on the sand hills on the right bank of the Urumea River, and directed against the long flank opposite, which, however, it was soon discovered could not be levelled in three days. Two breaches being reported practicable, it was determined by Sir Thomas Graham to attempt to storm at low water the next morning. Owing to some inconceivable fatality, this said attempt took place at least three hours too soon, and instead of having a dry shingle to advance over, the water was nearly up to the men's necks, and various other mistakes occurred;

our own batteries from the opposite bank (it being quite dark) continued firing at the breaches whilst our men were in the act of mounting them, and a very large number were thus lost, and the few men who did get in were either killed or taken. Our loss was severe, and the men were besides much disheartened. The garrison made a sortie soon afterwards, in which nearly 200 prisoners fell into their hands, and our works were considerably injured.

Intelligence having been received that Soult had forced the pass of Maya,[1] and was in full march for Pamplona, and as our ammunition was entirely expended, it was thought advisable to re-embark the battering train, which was accordingly done, and no further works were undertaken, till a fresh supply of powder having arrived from England, the siege was recommenced with vigour, and everything was ready for another storm by the 31st, which I intended riding over to see, but Soult put a stop to that plan by attacking our position at Irun.

The Spaniards who occupied the advanced posts on the Bidassoa were surprised during the night by the enemy, who forded close to the Isle de la Conference and dislodged the Dons from a strong post on our right of the high road from Irun, and a strong column of 7,000 men was formed in readiness to attack the heights of San Mascal by daybreak. The Spaniards, however, having had time to recover, behaved well, and held their ground (which certainly was almost unattackable) with very tolerable resolution till about

[1] This intelligence was false. Soult forced the pass, but was immediately after beaten on his whole line.

3 o'clock P.M., when the French succeeded with about 300 men in establishing themselves on the summit of the heights, from whence two strong Spanish battalions ran in the most complete disorder. Fortunately, however, their reserve, about 4,000 strong, under the immediate command of General Freyre, who set a good example, resisted the contagion then rapidly spreading, and advanced in good order, and after a few minutes' resistance, drove down the few men who had reached the summit, and who, had they been supported in time, would most certainly have kept what they had almost incredibly gained. The battalions which had run were rallied, and Soult seeing this effort frustrated, and some British troops moving down, gave up the contest, which was a hopeless one apparently from the beginning, and retired again to the right bank of the Bidassoa, destroying at the same time the bridge he had been all day employed in throwing over. Thus ended this extraordinary attempt to relieve San Sebastian, which cost the French upwards of 6,000 men, and put the Spaniards in high spirits, it being the first action they had fought (unassisted by us) for some years in which they could claim the victory. The 4th division was in reserve in the rear on their right, and the 1st division on the left, and we had strong pickets out to force back the runaways, which was no easy task. The Spaniards lost about 2,000 men *hors de combat*, and it is to be hoped will now begin to find out that the French are not invincible.

In the evening we received intelligence that the town of San Sebastian was in our possession, having been carried by storm, after a most tremendous and bloody

contest of nearly two hours and a half continuance. Our loss was upwards of 2,000, and nearly one half killed or wounded of the detachment we had furnished. The accidental explosion of one of the enemy's mines, by which numbers of their own men were destroyed, terminated the affair in our favour. After gaining possession of the town, and driving the garrison into the castle, the usual horrors commenced, and every species of enormity was committed, and Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were imitated and surpassed, and *Herod completely out-Heroded.*

The scene the following day when I entered the town was dreadful, it was on fire in every part, and the misery of the unfortunate ci-devant inhabitants, who were endeavouring to save a remnant of their effects, the horrible number of dead, dying, and wounded wretches of every age, sex, and nation, beyond description. The fire was violent, and no attempt was made to save the town—why I know not; a few hundred men properly employed might easily have saved one half; but the fact was that no one seemed to think or care about the matter, particularly as it was said that the inhabitants were very active in assisting the garrison during the whole of the siege.

From the specimen of those houses which remained uninjured, it appeared to have been by far the most civilised and comfortable town in the Peninsula—the shops were excellent and well supplied. The impossibility of relieving the troops who had been employed in storming the town was a serious evil, as from the large sums of money most of them were possessed of they were in a continual state of brutal intoxication.

The Portuguese, however, must be excepted, as they very wisely kept themselves sober, and in general took advantage of their situation and transferred the doubloons from the pockets of our drunken soldiers into their own. They behaved admirably during the assault, and were the first in the town. As it became evident that nothing could be done against the castle but by shells, mortar batteries were immediately commenced, and after some offers of capitulation on the part of the garrison had been made and rejected, we opened so heavy a fire in the evening that they surrendered at discretion, and marched out the next morning to the number of 1,800, having lost nearly half the garrison during the operations.

Our loss was from first to last upwards of 5,300 killed and wounded. An immense proportion of officers were amongst this number, and the wounded in general were very severely hurt.

The place was certainly well defended. The impossibility of entirely preventing the communication by sea with France, and the constant assurances sent by Soult every day of relief, contributed not a little to prolong the business.

We ascertained afterwards that boats came and went away nearly every night. We remained at our camp a short distance from Irun, and commenced fortifying the line of the Bidassoa by means of numerous redoubts. On September 1 Soult attacked the Spaniards in front, but was repulsed, and we continued strengthening our position.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

France—Camp, Heights above Andaye, October 9, 1813.
Received October 25.

You will see by the address above that since my last we have thrown forwards our left, and that this part of the army has actually established itself within the French territory, a piece of audacity which will, I doubt not, very much displease his Majesty the Emperor. This operation, though rather terrific in appearance, was very easy in reality, and was in fact merely an affair of posts. Our great superiority in numbers, joined to its being something very like a surprise, gave us but little to do, and I do not believe that Soult had any intention of making a stand on this ground.

The passage of the Bidassoa is at low water a mere joke—we were none of us above the knees. Altogether it was a well-arranged and not badly executed operation. Sir Thomas Graham (who leaves us today) had the direction, and it made a very brilliant finale to his military career. Sir John Hope (his successor) very handsomely acted as an amateur, and in that capacity nearly had his head taken off by a nine-pounder. We all regret General Graham as a gentleman, but perhaps as a *commandant en second* we have not lost much by the exchange. Sir J. Hope brings a high reputation, but I am not sure whether this is not rather unlucky for him, as numbers of those who came out with the greatest name have shown themselves wanting when it came to the proof. We are so very little

advanced into France, that I cannot say much as to the dispositions of the inhabitants. Andaye, which is a miserable and nearly ruined village, was deserted before by all but a few fishermen, and all the scattered houses within our line were the same. Urogne, which is a small town in our front, and of which we had possession till it was deemed too far for our outposts, was evacuated, but the inhabitants in general will, I doubt not, remain, if we can restrain the Spaniards, who by the bye behaved extremely well in the affair the day before yesterday, and I think we may now fairly reckon on them. They are increasing very fast in number, and if we can manage to feed them, may easily be kept together. The possession of this position together with the pass of Vera (which was gained at the same time by the Light division) very much improves our situation, and will render the communication from right to left much shorter and more secure. We cannot, however, remain here more than three weeks or a month longer; the winter usually sets in by the beginning of November, and cantonments will then become absolutely necessary.

It is probably too late to undertake the siege of Bayonne, and without that place our cantonments on the Adour would not be very pleasant. The possession, however, of the Vera pass is a great point gained, even though we should recross the Bidassoa, and when Pamplona falls we shall be in a very threatening posture. Our force (effective) would then be full 100,000 infantry and from 15,000 to 20,000 cavalry; and two-thirds of the whole number equal to anything. The proximity of the coast is an incalculable advan-

tage, as we daily experience, and happen what will, this must surely operate as a diversion of the first magnitude in favour of the Allies in Germany, who really seem to be going on most prosperously. Another congress is the only thing I fear, and that would be of much more weight than another conscription. No people can be more sick of the war than the French are; and even their generals do not scruple to say so. Gazan, who is now *chef d'état major* to Soult, told Mr. Larpent, our Judge Advocate (who was sent back a few days ago), that all he wished was to be allowed to retire to his farm and pass the rest of his life in peace, but that this he was convinced could not happen while the Emperor lived!! Soult has proposed a regular exchange of all officers, and that civilians shall never be considered as prisoners.

This is a gentlemanlike mode of doing things, and will, I have no doubt, be acceded to. We are wonderfully polite at the outposts; and, in short, are cutting each other's throats quite in a friendly way.

They confess that the accounts from Germany are very bad, and I suspect are most thoroughly frightened at their present prospect. We are expecting four more regiments immediately; two British and two Portuguese. The 29th from Cadiz, and the 72nd from Gibraltar, are the English. The 62nd landed the day before yesterday, but was not moved up. We received drafts for the two brigades of Guards to the amount of 700 men a week ago, and this division is now upwards of 6,000 effectives. Considerable drafts have also lately arrived for most of the regiments out

here, as well as large remounts for the cavalry, who are in beautiful order—ditto the artillery.

We are extremely healthy, but are beginning to want our new clothing. Altogether, few armies ever were in finer order at the end of the campaign, and their conduct throughout has been as orderly in cantonments as good in the field, and I trust we shall not have a repetition of last year's letter. The Field-Marshal never was more popular than at present, and his appearance is now generally followed by a cheer down the line. He is certainly the greatest military character England ever produced.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

St. Jean de Luz, December 15, 1813.
Received December 31.

Here we are! just returned from an unexpected week's campaigning, in which we have had some sharp work in the bivouacking way. The despatches will give you the general outline of our operations much better than I can. The object of our moving was, I believe, twofold: first, to get better cantonments on our right; and, secondly, to endeavour to obstruct the navigation of the Adour, by which Soult supplied nearly the whole of his army, without which it was imagined he could not remain concentrated at Bayonne, and in a position which rendered our quarters liable to be beaten up whenever he chose.

In these objects we have perfectly succeeded, and I think the campaign may be fairly looked on as ours. You will see by the returns that the Coldstream have had their usual good luck, although the other battalions

of Guards have contributed a pretty fair proportion of killed and wounded. This was purely accident, but somehow or other it always is the case. The defection of the German battalion was in consequence of secret orders from the reigning Duke of Nassau, and was adroitly managed. Unfortunately for them one battalion (of Baden) has been left behind and some cavalry; they have been disarmed and sent to the rear. The battalions which came over were some of the best troops in the French army, and in high order. They had only received their new clothing the day before. They will be no bad reinforcement wherever they land. Suchet has two battalions of them at Barcelona, and means have been taken to forward the orders to them, so that I hope they may follow the example of their countrymen.

The business on our right on the 13th[1] was a very brilliant one, and the loss of the French enormous. I have seen numbers of officers who have been over the ground, and who all say they never witnessed a more murderous scene. Our loss was comparatively small. The Portuguese behaved nobly and bore the brunt of the business. None of the late conscription were brought forward, and the loss has in both instances fallen on the best troops Soult has; he must be at least minus 8,000 men—we, about half, not much more than half that number British.

[1] On the 13th was the bloody victory of the Nive, and for five days previously the most desperate combats took place in the Pyrenees, during which Soult was pushed back inch by inch into France. He lost 6,000 men, and two generals killed and wounded; the Allies 5,019 men, including five generals — Hope, Robinson, Barnes, Leith, and Ashworth.—Napier, vol. vi. p. 400.

I have seldom seen sharper work than the affair of the 10th in front of Bidart. The Royals, 9th, and 38th (under Colonel Greville) were, owing to a brigade of Portuguese giving way, completely surrounded; they extricated themselves, however, by charging to the rear, and either taking or bayonetting all those who had got there; such troops may be destroyed but not beaten.

It is a fact which may appear absurd, but it is literally true, that the French officer who commanded the battalion most advanced called to Colonel Barnes of the Royals to surrender, as all resistance was folly; to which Colonel B—— replied by telling him that if he and his men did not instantly lay down their arms every soul would be bayonetted, and, to the great astonishment of, I believe, all parties, the Frenchmen very quietly complied. Our position was at the time a critical one. Soult had five divisions, probably 30,000 men, bearing directly on the 1st and 5th, which could not muster more than 12,000 or 13,000, including the independent brigades at present with us. Our ground, moreover, was but bad and not over well taken up, and the troops a good deal fagged with the severe march we had made the day before in the *reconnaissance*, when we drove in the French outposts close to Bayonne, of which town we had a capital view. The works there do not appear very formidable, though much has been done. The Citadel at St. Esprit is the only real obstacle, but the place would require regular approaches, and those cannot be made at this time of the year; and the army now there must, moreover, be driven nearly to the Garonne, an operation which would require all the

Spaniards to be brought up, and the present state of the roads totally prevents the possibility of provisioning so large a force as we should then be. Thus, all things considered, I think we shall remain quiet for the winter if Soult will let us; and this, after what has happened, one should think he would be glad to do. I ought now to congratulate you on all the late glorious events which have followed each other with such rapidity that one hardly knows which took place first. It is really a comfort to have lived till now. What are we to expect? Do you think a peace with Buonaparte should be made or not! It cannot be a permanent one, and yet, if he accedes to fair terms, what can be done? Before this last business I had a day or two's shooting, and killed three woodcocks and two couple and a half of snipes. The *paysans* say that in frosty weather they both abound. Wild fowl is abundant, but I have at present no dogs. I shall steal the first I see.

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS, CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

St. Jean de Luz, December 30, 1813.

On October 10 Lord Wellington determined to throw forward the left wing, and to occupy the last range of the Pyrenees, called the heights of Andaye.

The enemy had weakened their line in that part some days before, and it was supposed contemplated a second attempt to relieve Pamplona. Accordingly the whole of the left column were assembled during the night of the 9th on the high road from Irun, pontoons being in readiness to throw over the Bidassoa,

and it was arranged to ford in four columns. The second brigade of Guards was in the centre of the three British columns.

Owing to some confusion in the formation, everything was not ready until more than an hour after daylight; but, strange to say, the French on the other side of the river did not perceive anything unusual, and dismissed their line a few minutes before we made the attack. The strong working parties we had been in the habit of sending out about that hour probably contributed to this carelessness on the part of the French. They were regularly surprised, and we gained the first heights with scarcely any opposition. They attempted, however, to make a stand on the second range, but were instantly driven from it by the 5th division, which had crossed the river near Fontarabia.

One shell struck the Coldstream when in close column, and did some mischief. The light infantry were smartly engaged, and drove the enemy beyond the town of Urogne; but that place being full of wine and spirits Lord Wellington ordered it to be given up again, but not before some of our men got brutally drunk; and some of the Germans plundered so openly that a severe order was the consequence. The Spaniards under General Freyre crossed in two columns on our right under a heavy fire, and behaved really well. We immediately took up a most superb position, extending from La Rhune mountains to the sea, and commenced several batteries, having thus fairly entered the sacred territory of *Le grand Empereur*, and dislodged the enemy from a strong position, with the loss of not more than 500 men *hors de combat.*

The fording of the river proved a mere joke, but the ditch which divides the Ile de la Conférence from the mainland on the French side, over which we had to pass, was more difficult, and most of our field officers were unhorsed and obliged to walk some way. We afterwards heard that Soult, who was at Bayonne at the time, was excessively enraged, and put several general officers under arrest for suffering us to dislodge them with so little opposition. A strong line of redoubts and batteries was immediately commenced, and both sides set to work fortifying their respective positions with great care. The enemy occupied a line covering St. Jean de Luz on their right, and the high road from St. Jean Pied de Port on their left, occupying both places, and having their front completely covered with batteries and redoubts without end. The allied army was in a position nearly parallel, on an immense chain of mountains, including those of La Rhune, Veramarja, &c., which, being at this period almost always covered with clouds, rendered the situation of the troops unpleasant enough. Everything remained quiet until November 8, when a general advance took place (Pamplona had surrendered by capitulation a few days before). The right and centre attacked, and turned the left of the enemy's line, whilst a feint was made by the left column on that part directly opposite us. We drove in their pickets, and carried the village of —— without much resistance, and kept their line on the alert during the remainder of the day. From the heights we now occupied above Urogne we could plainly distinguish the progress of the action on our right, where the contest at times was very severe.

During the night the French abandoned all their works, burnt the carriages, and spiked the guns in the different batteries, and retired through St. Jean de Luz, destroying the bridges over the Nivelle in that place. These were, however, repaired with very little trouble, and care having been taken to prevent plundering, we moved through that town on the 9th, and took up a position on the heights near the village of Gatary on the Bayonne road, the enemy occupying Bidart, &c. with a strong rear-guard: from this, however, they withdrew the next day. The weather proving very bad, and the roads becoming more and more impassable every day, the whole army was put under cover about the 20th; the two brigades of Guards occupying St. Jean de Luz, where we were uncommonly well off. Strong outposts were established in front of Bidart. On December 9, Lord Wellington having determined to cross the Nive with the right wing, the left column was again ordered to make a diversion to draw the attention of the enemy. We accordingly assembled by daybreak in front of Bidart, and drove in the enemy's posts close to their entrenched camps round the works of Bayonne, and took up a position on the heights above Anglete, within three-quarters of a mile of that place.

Soon after dark we withdrew quietly, and after a most fatiguing twenty-four hours again reached our quarters at St. Jean de Luz, the 5th division and two Portuguese brigades remaining as before at Bidart and the neighbourhood, having the Light division on their right. On the morning of the 10th we were a good deal astonished by a heavy firing which commenced early near Bidart, and we received orders towards the

middle of the day to move up with all possible expedition to the support of the 5th division, which had been very severely engaged since daylight with a superior force. We arrived just as the position had been recovered by a gallant effort of the brigade, composed of the Royals, 4th, and 36th regiments, all of whom were nearly surrounded, by bayonetting or taking all those who had penetrated to their rear; the loss on both sides had been very considerable.

We now found that Marshal Soult, having in vain attempted to prevent the passage of the Nive the preceding day, had now endeavoured, by bringing a very superior force on the left column, to oblige Lord Wellington to recall the troops on the right to our assistance, and we found from the reports of the prisoners and deserters that no less than five divisions had actually been opposed the whole of the day to the Light and 5th divisions. Both sides remained in position during the night and following day, towards the evening of which another sudden attack was made by the enemy, which was repulsed without much difficulty. The 1st division relieved the 5th during the night, and on December 12 a severe *tiraillade* was kept up by the enemy during the greater part of the day, from which the first brigade of Guards and the 3rd regiment suffered severely, owing principally to the unmilitary way in which the ground was taken up, the advanced line being much overcrowded with troops, who being without any cover afforded every opportunity to the enemy's skirmishers to annoy them. Colonel Martin and several other officers were lost on this occasion.

On the following night the French entirely withdrew from our front; and Soult, finding that no impression could be made on our columns, determined on trying the same experiment on Sir Rowland Hill's corps, who had during the preceding day established himself at Villa Franca, Hasparen, &c., and pushed his left down to the Adour, thus cutting off the main source of supply to the French army at Bayonne.

Soult accordingly attacked on the morning of the 13th with five divisions, but after a very severe contest was repulsed with immense loss, having expended between the 9th and 14th upwards of 12,000 of his best men. On the 15th the whole army went into cantonments, and we again returned to our old quarters at St. Jean de Luz, moving up occasionally to take out-post duty at Bidart; and thus ended the campaign of 1813, commenced on the Douro and concluded on the Adour!

1814.

After Napoleon's total defeat at Leipsic by the coalition, which had now been joined by Austria, he again raised 300,000 men to defend the French frontiers. Whilst the Russian, Prussian, and Austrian armies poured into France from the East, the British, Spanish and Portuguese entered it from the Pyrenees. Napoleon abdicated, accepting the Sovereignty of Elba and a pension of 80,000*l.* a year. Louis XVIII. was replaced on his throne. The allied armies returned to their respective countries; most of our veteran regiments were sent to America, and a European congress met at Vienna to re-settle the disorganised territories of Europe.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

St. Jean de Luz, January 9, 1814.
Received January 23.

I know not whether a letter from this part of the world is of sufficient interest at present to justify writing. Holland and the Congress[1] are of course the only places of any consideration in the way of news. However, I will not let the mail depart without what little there is to relate. We returned to this town

[1] At Chatillon.

yesterday, having been kept on the alert during the greater part of last week by a movement of the enemy on our right, which, however, came to nothing, and whether anything more than a change of cantonments on their part was intended seems doubtful.

The weather latterly has been very severe, quite as much so as is usually the case in England, so that you may well suppose bivouacs are no jokes. The movement of our right to the banks of the Adour last month, of which Soult gave so correct an account, had just the effect intended, and this last attempt was perhaps an endeavour to counteract that one. In addition to obstructing the supplies coming to the enemy, we have contrived to obtain very considerable ones for ourselves, and have actually entered into very large smuggling contracts with the inhabitants, who prefer running any risk rather than give their cattle to the French commissariat, who, not contented with fixing their own prices, give *bons* payable out of the produce of taxes not yet levied, which is pretty much the same as giving nothing; we of course pay ready money.

The good effects of the strict discipline we have preserved is now becoming apparent. Lord Wellington is quite as popular here as he ever was in Spain, and much more so than he is there at present, as they are extremely indignant at being prevented from committing every species of barbarity on the villages in France which are in our power. Here the only thing the people fear is the return of their own army; indeed, they are all making their fortunes as fast as possible. This being declared a free port, is becoming a great

entrepôt for colonial produce, which will be smuggled into the interior without much difficulty.

Everything in England looks alarmingly pacific, and I fear Lord Castlereagh would hardly set out for Frankfort unless a basis was agreed on. The Danes seem to have deserted Davoust just in time. I fear this Dutch war will take all the reinforcements we should have had, and that we shall be very far from being in a state to act with any decisive effect next spring, supposing the war to continue.

The Spanish army is going down hill rather than otherwise, and they are (now the danger is past) taking every possible mode of showing their jealousy and hatred.

The lives of those English officers who are obliged from circumstances to remain in Spain are daily exposed, and instances of assassination numerous. They are certainly the strangest people under heaven, and to my mind the most hateful. Their commissariat is so bad that we are obliged to feed every man acting with us, and as they are nearly useless it is not worth while to do this to any great extent. I conceive Lord Wellington will very soon resign his command of Spaniards, and have nothing more to do with them. A new Cortes will, they say, be immediately called, but I doubt their being at all more friendly towards us than the present. The real sore I take to be our not assisting them against the Creoles in South America, and, strange as it may now seem, I cannot help thinking that this subject will produce a war between England and Spain before many years are past. Their present shocking

ingratitude makes me half wish it, and I own I should enjoy being one of the army employed.

We are at present working hard at our position in front of Bidart, and are constructing works which will enable us to defend the high road with very few men, which is at this season of the year a most desirable object. Considering the severity of some of our late operations, the army is healthy, but we want some strong reinforcements to render us as strong as we were the beginning of the campaign. 50,000 effective infantry, British and Portuguese, is, I should think, the full amount of our numbers. To attack Bayonne would require at the very least double that number, and of this 70,000 must be good troops. We might no doubt collect 20,000 Spaniards, but we must feed every man of them, and as they would certainly commit every sort of enormity, we should perhaps force the inhabitants to quit their homes or to rise *en masse*; either of which would render our operations extremely difficult. All things considered, I do not think we can expect anything very brilliant in this part, unless the French army itself should be in a state of disorganisation, which is an event not very improbable; they are badly fed and not paid, consequently desert pretty fast, and unless Buonaparte can contrive to raise a little hard cash, I suspect the discontented will soon form the majority.

You may easily conceive to what shifts Soult is put; for instance, when he actually authorised a rich banker at Bayonne to make Lord Wellington an offer to supply the whole army with wine on condition of being paid in ready money. This was of course refused, and I believe he then offered to admit colonial produce to an

equal value of the first offer should be acceded to, which was also refused.

All my spare time of late has been taken up by an abominable general court-martial, of which unfortunately I am a member, which has prevented my shooting any of the numerous woodcocks, snipes, and ducks which the late severe weather has brought.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

St. Jean de Luz, February 7, 1814.
Received February 22.

The continuance of bad weather has put a complete stop to everything in the shape of military operations. Such a season has not occurred for many years; the rain has been incessant since the beginning of November (I might say October), with the exception of now and then a fall of snow. We had hopes of a change the day before yesterday, and were preparing for an immediate advance, but, alas! it set in again with renewed vigour last night, and there is no prospect of amendment.

The gales of wind have been equally abundant with the rain, and the damage done in this bay very considerable; several ships have been lost close to Bayonne.

You get all continental news so much earlier than we do, it is in vain to attempt to tell you anything new. Nearly one half of the French army in our front has been detached at different times within this last month towards Lyons, Italy, &c., and if we receive any strong reinforcements, there is, I think, a chance of Soult's

finding himself obliged to fall back behind the Garonne. He has about 8,000 men in Bayonne, which place we shall probably mask. It would be no easy matter to take it. This operation will, I suppose, be confided to our worthy allies, if they will undertake it. The arrival of the Duc d'Angoulême was rather unexpected. No peace with Buonaparte can now, I suppose, be looked for. This I own I am glad of; he is now tied to a stake, and can hardly survive the baiting he must experience. The sentiments of all the peaceable part of the community are decidedly against him, whether this is the case with the fighting part remains to be seen. Considering the bad weather, I do not think we are unhealthy. This brigade is certainly far otherwise, but the army is too weak to do much, 45,000 infantry at most. We must do our best.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp before St. Esprit, February 27, 1814.
Received March 26.

At length you see we have commenced operations, and are now safe on the right bank of the Adour. This operation was one of the most ticklish I have ever seen attempted, and nothing but extreme good fortune on our side and equal stupidity on that of the enemy could have enabled us to succeed in it. This you will easily believe when I tell you that our only means of crossing at the mouth of the river, where it is at least four hundred yards broad, and (except at high or low water) a tremendous current, consisted of two rafts carrying one hundred men between them, and four small boats,

about six or seven men each. Of course neither cavalry nor artillery could cross, and with these scanty means we had to make good our footing within three miles of a garrison of towards 10,000 men.

The original plan was that a large flotilla of gun-boats, &c. were to push into the river and clear the opposite beach, but the tremendous surf and breakers rendering the passage of the bar impossible, it was resolved to try the experiment without them; and the light infantry companies of this brigade were pushed across as a forlorn hope, and, to our great astonishment, instead of meeting with any resistance, the enemy's small pickets retired with the greatest civility, and we pushed on a few hundred yards and took possession of some sandhills in front.

It appeared, however, so extremely dangerous to cross over many troops, as it was evidently impossible to support them in case of a serious attack, that the whole plan was very nearly abandoned, when information was received that two battalions were on march from the citadel to regain their old ground. By dint of great exertion five companies of the left of our brigade, and a detachment of rockets, were got across in time to support the light companies, and after a smart skirmish the enemy were repulsed with very considerable loss. The rockets astonished them extremely, and will, I think, be of great advantage where (as in this case) artillery cannot be used. Possession being thus fairly established, we got over during the night of the 23rd nearly the whole of the brigade, and were then fully competent to meet anything likely to be sent against us. The flotilla being now off the bar, and the wind

fair, it was determined to attempt entering the river, although the pilots stated it to be impossible. All the first boats swamped, and several lives were lost; at length, however, a better passage being discovered, most of the larger vessels succeeded in getting across; but the thing was hazardous in the extreme, every boat took the ground, and was only driven over by the successive efforts of the breakers. It was literally sailing on 'dry ground.' The passage was not concluded till dark, and cost us, I fear, not less than forty or fifty of valuable lives. Amongst them Captain Eliot of the 'Porcupine' was, with his boat's crew, drowned within 200 yards of the beach.

By the night of the 25th we had got over above 5,000 men, and yesterday morning we advanced, drove in the enemy's pickets and completely invested the citadel, and have thus completed one of the most extraordinary operations in a military point of view I ever heard of. We are now busily employed in constructing a bridge, which has been a long time preparing, and which the enemy ought to destroy somehow or other. They certainly have the means of doing so. Whether this place is to be besieged or blockaded does not seem certain. We have now on this side the river about 12,000 men, of whom 4,000 are Spaniards, who are straggling over the whole country and will do much more harm than good.

The inhabitants are universally well disposed, and are much more inclined to assist us than their own army. I hear that the Duc d'Angoulême has already a French guard of 300 men, and the reports from the interior all agree in stating the people to be all ready to take

advantage of the first opportunity to rise *en masse*. The conscripts belonging to any part of the country occupied by our army catch at the first moment to return home. One victory here over Soult would go near to settle the business. That said marshal is moving back towards Toulouse, and Lord Wellington is endeavouring to bring him to action.

Their forces are about equal as to numbers, but by no means so in point of composition, and if any serious affair should take place I think the result may be easily foretold.

The enemy had a corps of conscripts at Dax two days ago; they, however, moved yesterday, and are not, I think, likely to trouble us. We have no intelligence from Paris which can be depended on; the last brought flaming accounts of a great victory over Blucher which nobody believed, and which was supposed to be nothing more than a reconnaissance.

We are waiting with great impatience for the arrival of our promised reinforcements from England, which we stand in great need of; 10,000 more men would make a material difference in our affairs.

A large draft of remount horses arrived a few days back, but we are more in want of infantry. Sir John Hope[1] has nearly recovered from the effects of his wound, and has resumed the command of his corps, which consists of the 1st and 5th divisions, with the brigades of Lord Aylmer, Pack, and Bradford, and about 10,000 Spaniards.

The total may be perhaps 21,000 infantry, and 1,500

[1] Afterwards Earl of Hopetoun. He was wounded in the combat of Barrouilhet, on December 10.

cavalry. The force under Lord Wellington is probably 30,000 British and Portuguese, and 10,000 Spaniards. He has a large body of cavalry, &c. If Soult persists in retiring towards Toulouse, he must abandon all hopes of relieving this place.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Camp before St. Esprit, March 15, 1814.

As I flatter myself a letter from Gascony may not be uninteresting in these times, I cannot refrain from sitting down to give some account of our operations here.

Before you receive this, the despatch from Lord Wellington will probably have forestalled any news I can pretend to relate. He appears to have conducted everything with his accustomed skill and success. It makes me shudder to think that he was struck the night before last by a spent musket-shot, which fortunately, however, has only produced a little stiffness. Our loss in the different affairs since the passage of the Gave d'Oleron is said to be about 3,000, and that of the enemy upwards of 10,000. Soult is retreating towards Toulouse, thus leaving open the high road to Bordeaux, to which place, if we had a few more men, a corps might very easily be pushed on; unfortunately, however, I fear we are too weak to take this advantage. The drafts we have been expecting are not yet arrived, and the late tremendous gales make us all tremble for their safety. Sir John Hope has with him before this place (Bayonne) the 1st and 5th divisions and three independent brigades, making altogether rather more

than 10,000 British and Portuguese, infantry, cavalry, and artillery in proportion.

I do not know what number of Spaniards are actually with us, but probably as many more, and we hear of other corps being expected in a day or two. When they arrive we are in hopes that the blockade will be entirely confided to them, and that we shall proceed either to rejoin Lord Wellington or move on Bordeaux. It is a sad disappointment to be left in the rear at this moment, and employed in this most irksome and harassing of all duties, in which no credit can possibly be gained.

The works of Bayonne have been put in a very respectable state of defence, and it seems generally understood that nothing more serious than a blockade will be attempted. The garrison have provisions for six months, and are said to be about 10,000 strong, of which number one-third are old troops. The citadel and town have separate governors independent of each other. The one commanding the citadel was wounded in a smart skirmish on the 27th ult. The weather has been during the last week as bad as possible, but at present looks better. The disposition of the inhabitants, as far as I have had any means of ascertaining, appears to be as good as could be wished; they afford us every assistance, and if we were to pledge ourselves openly never to make peace with Buonaparte, I have no doubt that the white cockade would be instantly hoisted; but till some decided step of that kind is taken, we cannot expect any man of sense to commit himself, particularly when a congress is actually assembled. Deputies, or perhaps I should rather say emissaries, from many of the

principal cities in this part of France, have been sent to the Duc d'Angoulême, who moves with head-quarters, and they all describe the people in general as most anxious for the restoration of their legitimate sovereign. Bordeaux is described as being particularly well disposed, which, considering its commercial interests, does not appear improbable. In a military point of view that port would be invaluable to us, as the bar at the entrance of the Adour is so bad as to render the entrance nearly impossible, and it was only by the most desperate exertions of the navy that the flotilla destined to form the bridge over that river could be brought in, and several valuable lives were sacrificed in this operation, which nothing but the absolute necessity of the case could have justified the attempting. The *morale* of the French army appears utterly lost, and their generals are as bad as their troops. Their suffering us to cross the Adour without opposition was a piece of negligence and stupidity for which an English officer would be broken. We had a fair opportunity of trying the newly invented rockets, which in this case answered admirably, and struck a panic into the raw troops of the enemy.

If they could be directed with a little more accuracy they would be tremendous, as it is they are an excellent substitute for artillery, and being perfectly portable would in many instances give a decided superiority to the party possessing them. Our latest accounts from Paris represent everything as going on well for us, and one should hope that the accession of Murat on the one side, and the arrival of the Crown Prince in Holland on the other, must give the Allies such an

overwhelming superiority of force, as to render success nearly certain. The desperation, however, of such a man as Buonaparte is not to be despised, and he will no doubt yet strike some hard blows.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp before St. Esprit, March 18, 1814.
Received April 4.

I am most happy to have now to congratulate you on the commencement of the *grand bouleversement* which took place at Bordeaux last Sunday, and which will, I trust, decide the wavering politics of all those in England who were thinking of peace with Buonaparte. You will of course receive full and particular details of this event by the papers. Nothing can be more complete and decided than the step they have taken, and there is not the smallest doubt of their example being followed by Pau, Toulouse, &c. the moment those places are at liberty. If Lord Wellington had at this moment 10,000 more disposable British infantry, the line of the Garonne would be cleared in a fortnight. Drafts to the amount of 4,000 have, thank Heaven! just arrived at Passages, and he has been joined ere this by nearly the whole of the cavalry. Head-quarters were at Aire the day before yesterday. Soult and Suchet are near Tarbes, and threatening an attack. They have between them somewhere about 30,000 of all sorts; Lord Wellington 16,000 British and Portuguese, and 10,000 Spaniards, not including cavalry, in which he is decidedly superior. So that, although we are not in sufficient force at this moment to act decidedly on the

offensive, there is no fear of being obliged to fall back. The 2nd, 3rd, 6th, Light, and Portuguese divisions are with Lord Wellington, the 4th and 7th with Beresford, who has crossed the Gironde, and I believe the Dordogne. The 1st, 5th, and three independent brigades, with the division of Don Carlos de España form the blockade of this place. It seems still undetermined whether we were to have a siege or not; all our *chasse-marées* except five were destroyed at St. Jean de Luz in a tremendous hurricane about a fortnight back, and we have consequently no means of bringing round the battering train from Passages. We are, however, busily employed in the other necessary preparations.

A French officer who deserted a few days back says they have not more than three months' provisions in the place, in which case we shall take it by a blockade, nearly, if not quite, as soon as by a siege. All the accounts from Paris agree in representing the *resurrection* of the allied forces after their *annihilation* by Buonaparte at Montmirail as wonderful. The junction of the Crown Prince must put them in a situation to resume the offensive, and we have reports here of a great battle close to Paris on the 6th or 7th, and that the French funds fell from *fifty-six to thirty* in one day. You may more easily imagine than I can express *our* mortification at being left at Bayonne in the rear, to this horrible duty at such a time as this. We have, however, still one hope, the division under General Clinton is marching from Catalonia by Saragossa on this place, and is expected in a fortnight. They will naturally either relieve or reinforce us, we hope the former, and that

we shall then rejoin Lord Wellington. I have just seen a letter from Bordeaux, which describes the inhabitants as enthusiastic in the extreme. We have taken three considerable stores and nearly eighty pieces of artillery, of what sort I know not.

There are two fortified forts commanding the harbour. The commandant of one is reported as being inclined to wear the *white cockade.*

March 19. Many thanks for yours of the 25th from Broadlands, which I have just received. Affairs look better than when you wrote, and I hope our advance will not turn out so desperate a measure as you seemed to fear. The outposts of the 2nd division were rather severely handled a few days back, and the 14th Light Dragoons suffered considerably. Whether this reconnaissance was preparatory to an attack or retreat seems dubious. Lord Wellington has closed up his corps and will make a good fight; would to God we were with him! No other news. The weather is beautiful, and roads mending fast. Soult, they say, has lost nearly 8,000 men by desertion since the end of last month.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near St. Esprit, April 24, 1814.
Received May 8.

So many great and glorious events have taken place since I last wrote that I hardly know on what to congratulate you first or most, but the *tout ensemble* is perfect. A more grand or magnificent termination to the tremendous scene which has been acting during the last twenty years could hardly have been imagined.

That Buonaparte should have been abandoned at last even by his very myrmidons is even better than if he had fallen in battle or by any other means; but is it possible that he should now retire quietly on an enormous pension? I think not. He will commit himself in some way or other. Here our joy at these great events is clouded by the sad loss of some of our most valuable friends and acquaintances, and what makes this circumstance doubly distressing is, that had the official accounts of the capture of Paris, &c. arrived but twenty-four hours sooner, the explosion of the 14th inst. would never have taken place. The position of our first line of posts was so perfectly unmilitary, being within (*not* 900 *paces*, as stated by Lord Wellington, but) only 150 *yards* from the outworks of Bayonne, that a sudden night attack in force was certain to succeed, which it accordingly did, and nearly the whole of our pickets were destroyed. The ground was kept by the enemy for about two hours, when we again got possession of our original line, and everything was in *statu quo* by daylight. It was a sharp business for some minutes. My company on moving up to support the pickets consisted of seventy rank and file, of which number forty-eight were killed or wounded in about a quarter of an hour.

The other officer with the company is, I fear, mortally wounded. I got off with a slight contusion on the leg, not so bad as *a good shinner*. The brigade lost 490 out of about 1,400. This, and the severe loss at the battle of Toulouse, are really distressing, and one cannot but feel vexed at losing so many invaluable lives without any one object being answered. Sir John Hope

rode full gallop into a party of the enemy, and was wounded and taken prisoner in an instant. It was pitch dark at the moment. General Colville succeeded him in the temporary command of the column.

The Governor of this place has withheld his belief of what has been going on,[1] as long as he possibly could. He is now, however, coming round. Hostilities have ceased since the day before yesterday, and to-morrow or the day after we shall, I suppose, be on good terms. The loss of his garrison in the sortie was very severe, and they say exceeded 700 men. Our ultimate loss will not, I hope, be so much, as our prisoners of course will be all saved. This will probably be the last affair in the fighting way we shall any of us see for some time; indeed it is hardly possible to conceive that war can break out amongst any of the great European powers during our lives. The Americans will, I hope, be stout, I shall try hard to get out there in some way or other.

Military men will become a complete drug in England. It is in vain for me to pretend to send you anything in the way of news; Paris is the focus of all interesting events at present, and you get papers from thence quite as quick as we do.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Camp near Tarbes, May 7, 1814.
Received May 26.

All accounts from hence have now so completely ceased to carry any interest with them, that it is, perhaps, hardly fair in me to fire again so soon in your

[1] The conclusion of peace.

direction. As this may, however, be nearly the last letter I shall have the opportunity of sending you from France, I will not spare you.

The ceremony of hoisting *le pavillon blanc* took place a few days after I wrote last, under a general salute from all the batteries of the town, citadel, gunboats, &c., answered by a salvo from our artillery and three cheers from the troops, who were assembled for the occasion. The spectacle was certainly an uncommonly fine one, and not easy to be forgotten. Since that time we have been on very good terms with our late enemies. A considerable number of the officers who are *soldiers of fortune* are, as you may believe, not very well pleased with the new order of things.

Under Buonaparte military rank took precedence of everything, now of course it will become secondary. The *soldiers*, however, as well as the inhabitants are overjoyed, and Louis XVIII. appears to be as firmly (if not more so) seated on the throne as if he had succeeded in the common course of events. This really is as wonderful a termination to such a career as Buonaparte has run as could have been imagined, and I cannot believe that it will end by his *living* for any length of time in Elba. We are expecting orders to embark every day, but know not either time or place. We hope Bordeaux but fear Passages. The Spaniards are exasperated against us at this moment to the utmost, and for no other reason than because they have been prevented from plundering France. Sir John Hope leaves us immediately for England, his last wound in the leg will, I fancy, be a troublesome one some time. Sir Rowland Hill commands the army. 13,000 infantry

and some cavalry[1] embark immediately at Bordeaux for North America.

I grieve to say we are not to be included in this number. My chance of getting out there in any other way than with the regiment is a very poor one. Generals Barnes and Kemp are talked of as being to accompany the troops now going, both *excellent* men. The Yankees must look sharp or they will find themselves in a scrape. I have some thoughts of a trip to the East Indies; I cannot afford to vegetate in England, and I fear all chance of promotion is now at an end with us. The garrison of Bayonne lost 54 officers and 910 men killed and wounded in the sortie. Our loss since the prisoners have been returned is under 600.[2] In the Coldstream Sir Henry Sullivan, Captain Crofton, and Burroughs and Ensign Pitt have died, and Colonel Collier's case is a hopeless one. Owing to the closeness of the action the wounds in general were very severe.

THE HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 3, 1814.

I have now to inform you that Boodles' fête is not to take place, and after the fuss there has been respecting

[1] These were the troops of which the Duke of Wellington said, 'If I had had them at Waterloo, I would have advanced at four o'clock.' This was told me by Lord Raglan. We had a great many young soldiers at Waterloo.—Editor.

[2] The sortie took place in a dark night, and the enemy were close to the pickets when discovered. The French crying 'A bas les armes!' our men shouted 'Don't fire, they surrender; and say "Pas d'armes!"' and in an instant received a volley at twenty yards. Captain Bowles was speaking to Sullivan at the moment, who fell dead in his arms. (Note from the writer.)

White's, perhaps under *existing circumstances* it is wiser to suspend any more assemblies of festivity and joy, if they are to be so chequered with these disgraceful animosities. I am equally obliged to you ; and if there is a naval review I would rather see that than any sight whatever, having been twice disappointed of the two famous spectacles of that description given in this country.[1]

The drawing room yesterday was well managed, and the Queen not oppressed, but the crowd in the other rooms as bad as ever, the regulations for chairs and carriages admirable, and Frederick Robinson and I were only absent from this house from two till four. The effect from the staircase at the Queen's throne was magnificent and the whole courtyard was lined with the Horse Guards, and this had a handsome and grand appearance. The Regent was much hissed and groaned at on his way to and from the drawing room. The Princess of Wales was in one of the private boxes upstairs at Covent Garden last night and had a little boy placed before her. Towards the end of the play a man in a higher box stood up, told the house they were honoured with the presence of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales and desired she might be cheered, which she was three times. 'God save the King' called for, and excessive applause at the lines 'confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks;' and, after all, this champion called for 'three cheers more for an oppressed Princess who should go to Court'—more cheering. All this is lamentable, and I fear, however silly the cause, may

[1] Lord Fitzharris, as Governor of the Isle of Wight, had an official yacht.

produce serious consequences. Lord Liverpool has given George Eden his father's place of Auditor of Greenwich Hospital, which is to be raised from 300*l.* to 1,200*l.* a year for him! It was done in consequence of Lord Buckinghamshire having taken a part of Lord Auckland's will, in which he excuses himself to his family for not having saved more money for them, judging it better to have spent it in bringing them forward in the world. This is what Frederick Douglas told me. Some Cossacks arrived last night and were cheered, and this I heard about nine o'clock, when they entered the Horse Guards. The mob was ready to pull them off their horses with enthusiasm, and my footman said he shook hands with one of them.

HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 12, 1814.

Having passed many hours in the Pulteney Hotel on Saturday, where we saw the Emperor of Russia pass and repass several times, I asked Princess Volkonski about their plans, and she said she had heard that they were to go to Portsmouth to-morrow se'nnight, and that it was probable they would embark there and not return to London. Lord Harrowby, whom Frederick Robinson met at Mrs. Ryder's, said it was still doubtful whether they would sail from Portsmouth, or return to town, go to Scotland, and embark at Leith. At all events, what most concerns you is, that at present they mean to be at Portsmouth on Tuesday the 21st; but I will keep a sharp look-out, and give you all the information I can. If you hear nothing, depend on it all

stands for the 21st, and I envy you the prettiest sight that there can or will be on this occasion. The moment is so curious, the assemblage of great people so distinguished, that it certainly produces a degree of interest one scarcely ever felt before. The spectacle at the opera was superb, and Lady Castlereagh says no theatre at Paris is so fine and striking.

It was full to overflowing, and we had many fainting and fatigued persons twisted through our box. The drawing up the curtain and singing 'God save the King' was very fine, and the Emperor, the Regent, and a large portion of the audience joined in the chorus. The acclamations were great, and just as the sovereigns were seated, fresh shouts of applause were heard directed towards the Princess of Wales's box, and there she appeared in a black wig and many diamonds; the Emperor rose and bowed, I think, to her; the Regent bowed also, I think to the applause; the King of Prussia also bowed, and it passed off very well.

Reports say these sovereigns mean to negotiate a reconciliation between the Regent and his wife. They have now certainly been seen under the same roof. I hear he was hissed going home. To-day we saw them all embark at nine o'clock to go to Woolwich. There were fifteen or sixteen great barges, and the Royal Standard hoisted on three of them. Of course the Regent went with the Sovereigns, and our Dukes with the Princes of Prussia, Wurtemburg, &c. Many lesser barges conveyed the Staff, some of our statesmen and officers; amidst others the great Duke of Fussingbustle, alias Frederick Robinson. It was a gay and beautiful scene—but your sea-show will be better.

HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 13, 1814.

Frederick Robinson has just called. He had the command of one of the barges yesterday; was to take eighteen foreigners with him, which he considered a shocking bore, but picked out two or three with whom he was acquainted.

The Emperor is, I am told, rather flippant in his conversation sometimes, and lectured the Regent the other day on toleration, when the Regent replied that it might be very well in his Imperial Majesty's dominions to admit people of all degrees into offices and power, but that if he was thoroughly acquainted with our constitution and habits he would know that it could not be. I give H.R.H. credit for so wise and spirited an answer. This is a piece with the Emperor's sending for Lords Grey, Grenville, and Holland.

You will probably see a curious and interesting scene at Portsmouth.

HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 14, 1814.

Having promised to send you all the intelligence I can, I now inform you, from the authority of Sir John Beresford, that all the ships which can be got round in time are ordered for the intended naval review on the 22nd. Sir John asked me to go on board his ship; and much as I should like such a sight in preference to any other, I knew it must be impracticable for women to

arrive in time, or even at all, after White's fête. That I would relinquish; but other insurmountable difficulties exist. The Emperor means to review his own 14,000 Russians, who are to be landed at Portsmouth on purpose. This may be vainglorious, and is certainly a strolling army going about to exhibit—but what I regret is, the Regent insisting on a previous review at home of our troops, against the opinion and advice of his best military friends, who say he really has no troops in the kingdom fit to be shown off, and he has an admirable excuse in saying his finest troops are with the Duke of Wellington. Let him confine himself to a naval review, and all will be as it should be. The Emperor stopped and inquired for your father at the Lodges at Park Place. This was kind and gracious.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Park Place, June 15, 1814.

Before I begin my story, I must ask whether you are decided as to going to the naval review in your yacht, and whether you will admit me and Catherine therein? If so, on what day, and at what hour, and at what place is the *rendezvous*? I suppose either Lymington or Southampton. In either case I should sleep at Broadlands. Now for my story as to the royal journey to Oxford.

We went to Henley with Mrs. Scott, and established ourselves at a window of the Red Lion. The first who passed was the Regent; a party at Henley had taken great pains to have him cheered, which they

accordingly did, and the band played 'God save the King.' He was in a close carriage; leant back quite in the corner with his head down, and scarce moved or made the slightest sign or bow. The people are completely disgusted with him.

Many other carriages came by degrees, all cheered; and at length Alexander and his sister, who were drawn throughout the whole route by the people, who would not suffer a horse to be put to. He behaved remarkably well, stood up in the open carriage with his hat off, bowing very gracefully first to the ladies at the Inn, and then to all the people, and shaking hands with many of them; and all with a most pleased and good-humoured countenance, and making a perfect contrast with the Regent. He and his sister wished on my account to get out and speak to the ladies, I believe; but the mob drew them on with such celerity they could not stop, which was vexatious, as I should have gone down to receive them and conversed with them. The King of Prussia followed, and was equally drawn by the people, but sat still and did not show off at all. The young Prussian Princes are very good-looking, particularly the nephew. The people were racing for Blucher, and actually took possession of the turnpike to draw him over the bridge as well as through the town. I sent Dixon to Sir C. Stewart to beg him to bring him (Blucher) up into the Inn—they could not stop the people till they got half-way down the street, but then made them turn and return to the Inn, and with great difficulty got through the crowd to the house.

He is a very fine old man, handsome and fair,

without a wrinkle, but feeble on his legs, talks a tolerable French gibberish, was very tender in his regrets at not seeing your father.

We drank his health, and he ours, and then went to the window and drank to the people. You never heard such a scream of delight. He complained he was fatigued to death—had had no sleep for three nights—with all the festivities, but was much gratified at his reception, which is certainly far beyond any of them. I don't believe he is ever allowed to be drawn by a horse anywhere. He stayed about a quarter of an hour, and then was dragged, God knows how far, out of the town.

The two young Princes of Prussia are very good-looking, one, nephew of the King, quite a beauty. They all return this evening or in the night, and have such a number of things crammed into each day they must die of it.

Alexander stopped at our lodge. The gardener's wife was there, and he asked her, in as good English as my own, if this was not Lord Malmesbury's? how he did? and whether he knew the Emperor was to pass? She replied very properly that Lord Malmesbury *did* know it, but was very unwell; and he said something in a strange language to the lady with him (the Duchess of Oldenbourg). I never was so tired with the mental and physical fatigue in the extreme heat of yesterday. It is as hot to-day, although we had a severe thunderstorm in the night.

HON. MRS. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 16, 1814.

I now hear that the Russian troops cannot be landed before to-morrow se'nnight, that the ships that are to bring them are part of those destined for the naval review, and consequently neither that nor the review of the Russian troops will take place. The Emperor stays till Thursday, because other things for his reception at Portsmouth cannot be ready sooner. The Regent, I understand, is tired of the whole thing, and he is certainly fagged and fatigued, and looked very ill last night at Lady Hertford's ball, which in its way was magnificent; but the potentates having dined at Lord Castlereagh's, and gone from thence to the play and afterwards to the opera, did not arrive till near one o'clock. They entered to 'God save the King.' One room was appropriated to waltzing, and the library to country dances. The Emperor's manner is certainly very pleasing and easy; he waltzes well, and began with Miss Rawdon; he afterwards danced a country dance with Lady Grantham, and after supper with Mrs. Arbuthnot; his mouth and smile are pleasant and remind me of the Empress Catherine. The King of Prussia is a fine grave-looking man, and seemingly tired with all these gaieties.

Prince Augustus of Prussia is handsome, ditto Czernicheff. Fanny waltzed with the Prince of Orange. I wanted to see the Duke of York and Bulow, who were both there, but I could not fix the names to the faces, and there were such numbers of foreign faces and uniforms I could hardly believe myself at a ball in England.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

London, August 10, 1814.

I am sorry to say that the promotion in the Guards has been officially notified to-day, and turns out just as I prognosticated. Only three companies are given to the regiment, and the remainder to all sorts of toad-eaters at the Horse Guards. Amongst others W., who came into the Guards two years after my brother and has hardly ever seen a shot fired, is put over his head. You may imagine he is much disappointed, but as grumbling will do no good I preach philosophy to him and comfort him as well as I can, though it really is too bitter to gulp down quite quietly.

The American news is, that Commodore Sir James Yeo[1] has certainly given up, but I do not know who is to succeed him. The enemy have recovered their superiority on the Lakes, and we are obliged to avoid a decisive engagement. I hope to hear of Admiral Malcolm going from Quebec to take the command, and that the amazing increase of means, naval and military, which Sir George Prevost must have at his command, will turn the tide in our favour. There is no doubt that a very large expedition is preparing under Lord Hill, and they say it is to sail in September, but its force and destination are still kept a profound secret. Government are taking up transports in abundance, but no troops are yet named. You see we persevere in sending every frigate we fit out to America, and as all

[1] In the preceding April, he and General Drummond had taken Fort Oswego, and defeated the Americans on several occasions.

their cruisers of course come here, there is but little chance of their meeting.

We have one ship (the 'Hyperion') cruising in the bay and five or six on the Irish coast, and this I believe is the whole force on the home station. The Americans cruise from the Western Islands to the chops of the Channel, and sweep their ground completely. I have no doubt we shall have their frigates off the Lizard this winter.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Brussels, October 3, 1814.

Though I have not much to tell you since my last, yet I must write to congratulate you on the capture of Washington, &c. This is just what it ought to be, and a few more expeditions of the same sort will bring Brother Jonathan to his senses.

H. Goulbourn came here yesterday for a day or two and received the 'Gazette' just after his arrival; he very politely sent it to Mr. Clay, who was in the next hotel. I was very near putting on his servant's coat and taking it myself. I hope New York will follow Washington, and if we can make a dash at Sackett's Harbour, *tant mieux.*

Long Island will make a famous *place d'armes* if we are strong enough to hold it. I suspect the Yankees will find some difference between the battalions arrived from Bordeaux and those they have been in the habit of meeting. You will be sorry to see some names in the list of killed and wounded. Poor Parker[1] was, I

[1] Sir Peter Parker, captain of the 'Menelaus,' lying in the Chesapeake, landed 120 men on August 30, and was killed in the skirmish with the enemy, who obliged us to retire with the loss of forty-one *hors de combat.*

think, an acquaintance of yours. Thornton of the 85th is an excellent officer; he will, I fear, be *hors de combat* for a long time.

The destruction of their naval establishments ought, I think, to be our main object; if we attempt to penetrate too far into the interior, we shall unite and make soldiers of them. The conferences at Ghent will be resumed again in a few days.

You will not, of course, expect any news from hence. The Prince Sovereign sets off to-day for Vienna, where they say everything is to be amicably arranged.

This place is nearly as dull as possible. The plan I mentioned in my last, of taking away our billets and giving us lodging money instead, has just been put into execution. It will be about 30*l.* a year out of our pockets, as, directly the worthy inhabitants of this town found out that we were obliged to take their houses, they doubled their prices; thus you see all arrangements are at our cost. However, as we shall now be allowed to cook in our own houses, and shall not be obliged to live at the coffee houses, it will be a change for the better. We are expecting a pack of hounds from England, which the hereditary Prince has written for. *En attendant*, racing is the order of the day. We had a grand meeting on Monday, at which half Brussels was present. It was certainly a pretty sight. Being a light weight, the Prince constituted me his jockey, and as, luckily, his horse won, I am rather in favour. He always asks after Lord M——, and every one at Park Place. No one can be more popular than he is, more particularly with the English. I think the natives are more reconciled to the idea of becoming Dutch, though

they would certainly prefer returning under the dominion of the Emperor of Germany, who made Ostend a free port, and probably would do the same again. The more I see of this country the finer I think it; before we came, I have no doubt that one might live for one-fourth of what you can in England.

I have had no shooting as yet; when the woodcocks and snipes arrive, I shall commence operations. We are now, however, obliged to get regular leave from the *lords of the manor*, and, moreover, to *take out a license!* This you will think quite right, but to us, who have been accustomed to bully a little, it is rather a bitter pill. Since I arrived here, I have read Colonel Jones's account of the sieges in the Peninsula in 1811, 1812, and 1813, and I must confess it is, to my mind, a very fair defence of our engineer department; and if you still feel any interest in campaigning, I recommend it to your notice. I fear my chance of getting on the staff is but a bad one. I believe the hereditary Prince has only the appointment of his own aides-de-camp; all other situations are either filled up at the Horse Guards, or by Sir Henry Clinton, who is second in command here. As to promotion, all chance of that is now completely at an end, and I see no possibility of my getting a company under eight or ten years.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Brussels, December 30, 1814.
Received January 24, 1815.

I confess your Jeremiad, as you call it, almost made me angry, and put me in mind of an old lady of my

acquaintance who allowed that, 'though she had never any great misfortunes to complain of, she always contrived to make little ones do just as well.' Seriously, now that we have brought everything to a conclusion which the most sanguine man alive could never have ventured even to hope for, you shall leave off *croaking*. Depend on it, John Bull's constitution is quite strong enough to stand all the vomiting and purging he is likely to have, his temper is the only thing I fear.

Long before you receive this, you will of course have heard of the preliminaries with America being signed on the 23rd. The terms have not transpired. They are I hope tolerable. The great point appears to be restricting the Yankees from increasing their naval force on the lakes. Operations may have been carried on in the Chesapeake for nearly a month later than our last accounts, and I trust we may yet have something to boast of before we shake hands with Brother Jonathan. Selfishly speaking, I am bitterly grieved at the termination of war, and of consequence at the total extinction of all my hopes of promotion, on which subject a Jeremiad would be quite excusable. I will, however, set you a good example, and instead, wish you and all around you a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Here we are doing nothing but dining and dancing. I never led so dissipated a life in that way before, and am beginning to grow rather tired of it. From all I hear, we are very likely to remain till April or May.

The Brabanters are not sufficiently reconciled to their junction with Holland to be left to themselves. Their army goes on well and will, in appearance at least, soon be a good one. From all our accounts from Paris, it

would seem that the French army are still eager for war, and were it not for the want of money, I really think it would be no bad thing to indulge them for a few months, taking care, however, to secure the sovereign of Elba. This town is uncommonly healthy, I never remember our sick so few, even in England. In my company, I have only one man out of seventy-five who does not take duty. Brussels is a perfect manufactory of matches. Amongst others which are in progress is one between a particular friend of mine, Lord Hotham, and Lady Georgina Lennox (the third daughter); this is, however, a profound secret at present, though of course known to about half the world. You must not, therefore, quote me. The lady is as near perfection as human nature admits of, and in every respect the most delightful girl I ever saw.

1815.

This year witnessed the flight of Louis XVIII. from Paris, the return of Napoleon to power for a hundred days, his defeat at Waterloo and abdication, his exile to St. Helena, and the second restoration of the Bourbons.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Brussels, February 6, 1815.
Received February 11.

The Carnival has just begun in this town, and the people are masquerading it and making fools of themselves to their heart's content. John Bull looks on, and wonders what the joke is.

Nevertheless, in the midst of all this apparent jollity so very ill a feeling exists, that at this moment all the police and military of the town are parading and patrolling in all directions, and the appearance is more like London in one of Burdett's rows than a carnival. Until the fate of Belgium is definitely settled this will be the case. The Orange Government rather loses than gains ground, in point of popularity.

The expense of keeping up and organizing an army, of which one half deserts monthly, precludes the possibility of taking off any of the old taxes, and as the people always expect everything to be done at once, they

are extremely discontented. This feeling will probably contribute more than anything else to prolong our stay in this country, which, to say the truth, I am not sorry for, having no wish to revisit England as a captain, and as there seems no possible chance of promotion, the longer we stay abroad the better.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Brussels, March 18, 1815.
Received March 31.

I have sent you very few despatches from this part of the world of late, from having literally nothing to tell you that I thought you would give two pence (much less half a crown [1]) to know; now, however, you may be anxious to hear how we go on. Every preparation is made or making for our taking the field at a moment's warning. Our heavy baggage, supernumerary women and children, &c. go off to-morrow for Ostend, and a considerable part of the army is actually *en route* for Mons, where the first point of assembly will be. We shall probably not move from hence until a plan of operations is determined on. We are all speculating on the arrival of our old commander-in-chief, and that both this army and that of General Kleist will be placed under his orders, in which case he would have a force of very nearly 20,000 men; not, perhaps, of the very best description, but (under him) likely to play an important part in the present game; that is, supposing Buonaparte to make a dash at Paris, an event which I cannot but conceive extremely probable.

[1] The postage of a letter at that time.

Our latest accounts leave him at Lyons on the 11th, and state him (which I can hardly credit) not to have above 9,000 or 10,000 men. In the present disposition of the French regular army, it seems impossible to move any force, even against this number. One half of the men will not fight against him, and the other half will fight for him. This feeling, however, appears to be almost entirely confined to the old soldiers. The people are either neuter, or decidedly against him. A civil war will, of course, ensue; but if Austria, Prussia, &c. choose to come forward with energy, it seems impossible that it can be the affair of many weeks. His arrangements were certainly well combined, but in this part of the world have failed entirely. At Lille the popular feeling is excellent, and the arrest of Drouet and fortunate capture of the two Lallemands have ruined all his plans. He is so extraordinary a character, and infatuates mankind so completely, that one is almost afraid of arguing from common principles; otherwise, this really does appear the most desperate and ill-timed attempt imaginable. Had it been delayed a few months longer the chances would have been, probably, infinitely greater; as it is, perhaps, it will prove a most fortunate event.

The worthy Belgians are very quiet, and though they do not much relish their union with Holland, will nevertheless be glad to hear that Napoleon is knocked on the head. Selfishly speaking I ought to pray for a campaign, as my only chance of promotion. *Chacun pour soi*: but you will have so bad an opinion of my patriotism that I shall not venture to say what I wish for. Will it not be a most striking event if the French, after carrying fire and sword into almost every nation

on earth, and laying waste half Europe, should end as they began, by destroying one another, which at present seems more than possible.

We have been so long revelling in all the luxuries of Brussels, that I do not think we shall take very kindly to our bivouacs for a little while.

But campaigning in *France* will be very different from the same amusement in *Spain*. As I do not belong, properly speaking, to the battalion I am now with, probably the man in whose shoes I stand will insist on taking his own place, in which case I shall try to remain, either as a volunteer, or (though most likely without success) get on the staff. Anything is better than lounging in St. James's Street.

I congratulate you on the peace with America, which will put a stop to any more disgraces in that quarter.

Excepting in Lord Wellington we could hardly have sustained a severer loss than in poor Sir Edward Pakenham. I have not seen any private accounts, and can, therefore, form no opinion on the subject. There seems to have been a most unhappy delay in suffering so long a time to elapse between the landing and attack. I wish we could have terminated the war as brilliantly by land as by sea.

Affectionately yours,

GEORGE BOWLES.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Miller's Hotel, Jermyn Street, March 21, 1815.

I wish I could tell you anything agreeable from France, but (as you will hear from all quarters) Buona-

parte is advancing unresisted and unmolested, and hitherto not a shot has been fired. My only hope is in the instant advance of the Allies; and whether any of the armies on the French frontier are sufficiently movable for such an operation seems very doubtful. The troops embarked at Cork are ordered to Ostend, and all the disposable ones are directed to hold themselves in readiness.

Lord Exmouth is talked of for the Mediterranean again, and all the ships ready for sea are under sailing orders. It is particularly fortunate the westerly winds have detained so many, which would otherwise have proceeded to America. The Toulon fleet is not so strong as it was, one division having come round to Brest and Rochefort; the remainder are dismantled, and we have six sail of the line already there to prevent any *coup de main* against Sicily or Italy. What wonderful times we live in! Amongst other extraordinary events, Lord Cochrane has just been taken in the lobby of the House of Commons, where he was waiting till the House opened, intending to get in. There is no doubt that the Duke of Wellington is named as Generalissimo of the Allies, and I hope is long before this in the Netherlands. Nothing appears to me to move half fast enough. You may conceive the universal anxiety; I never witnessed anything at all like it.

LORD MALMESBURY TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

March 23, 1815.

Lady Liverpool sent what follows at an early hour this morning, since which we have heard nothing. If

anything new comes in the course of the day, I will try to learn it and write. 'The King of France has left Paris and was at Abbeville on Monday night. The Duc de Feltre has landed at Brighton, and the account is, that Buonaparte entered Paris without any resistance. The King does not appear to be coming here.' You will be able to draw inferences from these facts as well as any of His Majesty's Ministers, for they seem in the dark in common with us. Count Merveldt, who came here yesterday evening, told me he was confident his court would be steady, and he had reason to believe the other allies would be equally so. If this prove true it will end in a war in France, either a civil one or by invading its frontiers. I sincerely hope the first, as an invasion of France will be a desperate and envenoming undertaking. Luckily the French Toulon fleet is principally laid up in ordinary, and we are going to send Lord Exmouth with a strong reinforcement for the Mediterranean very shortly.

5 P.M. Monday.

I hear no further news, only a confirmation of what I have written.

The King of France, it is said, is going to Holland or Belgium; if so, it is clear he thinks the game lost. The Duc de Feltre is at this moment with Lord Castlereagh at his office.

CAPTAIN GEORGE BOWLES TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Enghien, April 8, 1815.

I can pretend to give you very little information beyond our own immediate vicinity. Every preparation is making for the approaching campaign, and if

the present plans are acted up to, it seems almost certain of being short and decisive. All the private accounts from Paris represent the alarm of the Buonapartists as excessive, and certainly it will be very hard if Napoleon and one-third of France can beat all Europe and the other two-thirds. These are such extraordinary times, and so many events have taken place which no human being could have foreseen, that one is afraid to speculate with much confidence on anything.

We are all, as you may suppose, most happy at being under our old commander the Duke, whom I have not yet seen, but hear is looking fat and in high spirits. His reputation stands fully as high in this country as either in England or Spain, and the Dutch Hanoverians, and I believe even the Belgians, are delighted at being under his command. He has refused a corps of 40,000 Prussians which was offered him, from a fear of creating jealousy, but they will of course act with us and do whatever he wishes. They are commanded by General Gneisenau, who was Quartermaster-General to Blucher in 1814, and to whom the whole credit of that army was supposed to be due.

They say we shall have an effective force of 150,000 men between the Meuse and the sea in less than a fortnight, one-third of which number must be fully equal to form a corps of observation against Valenciennes, Lisle, and Maubeuge; and with the remainder, under the Duke of Wellington, we shall, I hope, be able to give a very good account of any army Buonaparte can oppose to us. In cavalry and artillery we ought and no doubt shall be decidedly superior, as the enemy cannot have repaired the tremendous losses in those

arms they sustained in the two last campaigns. Our cavalry will come quite fresh into the field, and after their Spanish experience ought to do well. Selfishly speaking, it is impossible, as a soldier, not to look forward with some degree of satisfaction to a campaign which promises so well, but it is certainly a horrible calamity for the world in general.

I pity the poor inhabitants of the south of France if their neighbours the Spaniards should pay them a visit. If they do in any numbers they will destroy every town and village within their reach; and, unfortunately, that is perhaps the only part of France really well affected towards the Bourbons. We were all, I believe, very sorry to quit Brussels, which we did on the 25th of last month in great haste, expecting, though without any reason, an attack on the side of Tournay. We thus just missed seeing the entry of the *Roi des Pays Bas* into his capital, which I regret extremely. He is becoming very popular in his new dominions, and it is very easy to perceive a striking alteration for the better in the opinions of the people within a short time, to which the declaration of the Congress evidently contributed not a little; and although there are still a good many turbulent spirits existing in this part of the world, yet the better sort of people are beginning to be reconciled to the union with Holland, which at first was far from being the case. We heard that poor Louis was coming to take up his residence at the Château Laeken near Brussels; but that idea seems now again abandoned, and he remains at Ghent. The infamous way in which all the old Buonapartists have betrayed him, and the perfect French *sang-froid* with which they perjured themselves,

will be an excellent lesson should he again find himself on the throne of France. Of all those who have behaved worst, Ney appears the head. They will all, however, yet find, I hope, that honesty would have been their best policy.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Enghien, June 14, 1815.
Received July 13.

I was in hopes, long ere this, to have had some intelligence worth communicating, but, alas! here we still remain kicking our heels and passing our time as tranquilly as if Buonaparte was in Elba, and Louis XVIII. in Paris. I have, however, some good hopes that this will not be the case many more days, and I think I can venture to predict that my next will be dated from within the *sacred territory* of old France. The arrival of the Prussians at their station is the only thing waited for, and this will, they say, certainly take place by the 20th, and about that day those who can look into futurity say we start.

It is difficult to form a conjecture of what will be the line of conduct adopted by Buonaparte. He appears to have only a choice of evils; if he attempts to fight a general action on the frontiers, he may see his forces beaten in detail, and with our superiority in cavalry will find it very difficult to assemble an army beat at *Lisle* in any tolerable order near *Paris*; if, on the other side, he concentrates all his forces round his metropolis, he leaves the Royal Standard full scope, and will then be reduced at once from Emperor of *France* to King of *Paris*. In fact, do what he will, I cannot persuade myself

that we shall have a campaign of more than six weeks or two months' duration at farthest. Undoubtedly 200,000 or 250,000 veteran soldiers will take a good deal of killing, but numbers must prevail; and although we may sacrifice even an equal number in every affair, yet we shall hardly feel our losses, whilst his are irreparable.

I regret bitterly having to slave through this campaign in the ranks, where nothing is to be seen or got in the shape of information, honour, or reward; but I have no alternative but patience, and mine is, I own, almost exhausted, more especially as I have just had the mortification of being superseded in the command of the light infantry company by Lieutenant Colonel ——, who is about two years junior to myself in the Guards and army, and has served abroad about as many months as I have years.

However, to leave this subject, which I do not often suffer myself to dilate on. I believe I sent you some time back some account of the organisation of the army under the Duke's immediate command, since that time two more divisions have been formed, the 5th and 6th. They are, it is said, destined for Generals Picton and Cole, if the latter should arrive in time, which from something the Duke told me a few days ago I should think doubtful.[1] Not having heard *officially* anything on this subject, I am at a loss whether I ought to congratulate you or not. If I may, I assure you I do so most sincerely

[1] Sir Lowry Cole's marriage with Lady Frances Harris, Lord Malmesbury's youngest daughter. It prevented his being at Waterloo, where he would have had a division.

There has been for several days past an idea that an attack on this army was in contemplation, and if it could be made with any chance of a temporary success, it might perhaps be a good though a very hazardous plan. The army of the Moselle, about 25,000 strong, has lately been moved forward, and including garrisons the enemy probably muster 110,000 effective troops in our front. The united forces under Marshals Blucher and Wellington are nearly double, and we are quite ready. One day's march would concentrate us on the centre, and two on either flank of our present line, and we must always have sufficient notice to enable this to be done with ease. Tents have just been issued to us in quite sufficient numbers to encamp all those who cannot be cantoned during the campaign; this arrangement will save the lives of many. Every branch of the army is in high order. We have upwards of 120 pieces of field artillery with the British and Hanoverian corps, not including Dutch and Belgian.

I doubt whether so magnificent a display has ever been seen in point of equipment. The French will not much relish being out-numbered in an arm in which they have always been accustomed to have a decided superiority.

The moment we move you may depend on constant accounts.

CAPTAIN BOWLES TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Nivelles, June 19, 1815.
Received H. C. June 24.

I congratulate you as heartily as I know you would me on the glorious (though dearly earned) laurels of

yesterday; a day which will always stand proudly pre-eminent in the annals of the British army. A more desperate, and probably a more important, battle for the interest of Europe has hardly occurred even during the great events of the last three campaigns. Never were the scientific and determined efforts of Buonaparte more devoutly seconded than by the magnificent army with which he attacked yesterday the apparently motley crew under the *now* unrivalled Wellington. His despatch will put you so much more fully in possession of all the details than I have either at present time or powers of doing, that I cannot attempt more than a few particulars. The well-combined and rapid movements of the enemy on the 13th and 14th brought on an affair at Quatre-Bras (a small village on the high road between this place and Namur) on the 16th, in which the Duke of Brunswick was killed; and in which, owing to none of our cavalry being up, we fought at considerable disadvantage, and nothing, I am convinced, but British infantry would have maintained the ground and thus prevented a complete separation of the Prussians and ourselves, an object which Napoleon at one time flattered himself he had fully accomplished. Our loss was severe, and fell heavy on the 1st brigade of Guards, who under Maitland behaved admirably. We (the Coldstream) were hardly engaged, but our opportune arrival saved the day. You may guess how unexpected this business was, when you know that the Duke, Lord Uxbridge, &c., were at a ball at Brussels till near one o'clock on the morning of the 16th. I did not leave the said ball till past two, and since that have not even washed my face or taken off my

boots. You may, therefore, easily conceive the state in which I am writing this, in a coffee-room as full as possible of every nation under heaven, and a perfect resemblance of the Tower of Babel. But to proceed. The unfortunate result of a charge of cavalry, made after dark on the night of the 16th by the enemy on the Prussian centre, obliged Blucher to retrograde on the following day, and we of course did the same, and retired in regular order to the position in rear of Genappe, called, I think, 'Les hauteurs de St.-Jean,' having our right thrown back towards Braine la Leude, and the commencement of the forêt de Soignies in our rear. Napoleon followed this movement with the whole of his cavalry and pressed ours very hard. The Life Guards, however, did well. The weather was extremely bad, we passed the time wet through and up to our middle in mud. The Prussians promised to be in line on our left by eleven o'clock, and to attack the enemy the instant we were seriously engaged. The morning turned out tolerably fine, and was spent by Buonaparte in reviewing and haranguing his army. He promised every species of reward to all who distinguished themselves, confessed that the fate of the campaign and of France depended on the issue of that day's exertion.

He promised Ney to sup with him at Brussels, and certainly no person ever tried harder to keep his word.

The position we occupied was a good but not by any means a particularly strong one ; indeed, the nature of the country is such as to preclude the possibility of it. The most important point to hold was a farmhouse called Hougoumont, a little advanced on the right, and the maintenance of this part, which was ordered to be

defended *coûte que coûte*, was confided to our brigade.[1] About twelve o'clock the attack commenced on this point, directed by Napoleon, Soult, and Ney, the whole army having been previously almost paraded as if to bully us.

It probably consisted of upwards of 100,000 of his best troops, and I should conceive assisted by 200 pieces of artillery. From that time till past seven o'clock an incessant and most determined effort was made to carry the house and court with which it was surrounded, but in vain. Although it was set on fire and nearly burnt to the ground, we maintained our charge, and most dearly did the enemy pay, as well as ourselves, for the obstinacy of the contest.

About two o'clock a grand affair of cavalry took place on the left of our line, in which the Life Guards again distinguished themselves most gloriously, and all appeared to be going on most happily; although the non-arrival of the Prussians enabled the enemy to bring all his forces against us, and as he nearly doubled our numbers, it was evidently a ticklish moment. Fully aware of this, Buonaparte determined on one of those grand efforts with which he has so often decided the fate of nations; he brought forward the whole of his artillery, and under cover of the most tremendous cannonade I ever witnessed formed his cavalry into masses and the whole of the *élite* of his Guards, reserves, &c., and made a most determined and nearly successful attack on our centre. Our cavalry was driven to the rear of our infantry, and all our advanced artillery taken.

[1] Under Sir John Byng, afterwards Lord Strafford.

It was this moment, however, which showed the steadiness of British troops, and their confidence in their commander in its fullest light. Every battalion was in an instant in square and advanced by echelon to recover the guns. The French cavalry charged repeatedly with a desperation perhaps never before equalled, but not one square was ever shaken. On arriving at almost the line previously occupied by their cavalry the French masses of infantry appeared, and it then became necessary for some battalions to deploy, although al most surrounded by the French cavalry.

This state of things lasted for nearly an hour, during which the conflict was often extremely doubtful; but at length we restored everything to its original state, the artillery which was lost was retaken, and order re-established. The cannonade continued tremendous till about half-past six o'clock, when Napoleon again assembled *la Vieille Garde*, harangued them, and putting himself at their head, led them forward in different columns against our battalions still formed in squares. The first brigade of Guards advanced to meet the leading division, and poured in so well-directed a fire as literally to make a chasm in it. For a short time the fire of musketry was really awful, and proved too much for even these hitherto deemed invincibles; they gave way in every direction, and at this critical moment the Prussians arrived on our left, and their cavalry and light artillery put the finishing stroke to this eventful day.

As they advanced past our left columns they cheered us most heartily, and all their bands played *God save the King*. The effect you may conceive. The retreat of the enemy became a total *déroute*, and during the

night I believe not less than 160 pieces of artillery, with all their caissons, &c. were taken.

The Prussians entered Charleroi this morning, and the *débris* of this magnificent army, which was to have supped at Brussels on the night of the 18th, were only too happy to be at Maubeuge on that of the 19th. You will see by the 'Gazette' a most awful list of valuable names of killed and wounded. The Duke of Brunswick is regretted by all. The Prince of Orange behaved like a hero of the first class.

His wound I hope is not likely to be a bad one. How the Duke of Wellington escaped Heaven only knows; he was constantly in the heat of the engagement.

ORIGINAL MEMORANDUM BY THE WRITER.

At the Duchess of Richmond's ball at Brussels the Prince of Orange, who commanded the 1st division of the army, came back suddenly, just as the Duke of Wellington had taken his place at the supper table, and whispered some minutes to his grace, who only said he had no fresh orders to give, and recommended the Prince to go back to his quarters and go to bed.

The Duke of Wellington remained nearly twenty minutes after this, and then said to the Duke of Richmond, 'I think it is time for me to go to bed likewise;' and then, whilst wishing him good-night, whispered to ask him if he had a good map in his house. The Duke of Richmond said he had, and took him into his dressing-room, which opened into the supper-room. The Duke of Wellington shut the door and said, 'Napoleon has

humbugged me (by G—), he has gained twenty-four hours' march on me.' The Duke of Richmond said, 'What do you intend doing?'

The Duke of Wellington replied, 'I have ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre-Bras; but we shall not stop him there, and if so I must fight him *here*' (at the same time passing his thumb-nail over the position of Waterloo). He then said adieu and left the house by another way out. He went to his quarters, slept six hours and breakfasted, and rode at speed to Quatre-Bras, where he met Hardinge and went with him to Blucher, who took him over the position at Ligny. The Duke of Wellington suggested many alterations, but Blucher would not consent to move a man.

The conversation in the Duke of Richmond's dressing-room was repeated to me, two minutes after it occurred, by the Duke of Richmond, who was to have had the command of the reserve, if formed, and to whom I was to have been aide-de-camp. He marked the Duke of Wellington's thumb-nail with his pencil on the map, and we often looked at it together some months afterwards.

On the morning of the 17th, my company being nearly in front of the farmhouse at Quatre-Bras, soon after daybreak the Duke of Wellington came to me, and being personally known to him he remained in conversation for an hour or more, during which time he repeatedly said he was surprised to have heard nothing of Blucher. At length a staff officer arrived, his horse covered with foam, and whispered to the Duke, who without the least change of countenance gave him some orders and dismissed him. He then

turned round to me and said, 'Old Blucher has had a d——d good licking and gone back to Wavre, eighteen miles. As he has gone back we must go too. I suppose in England they will say we have been licked. I can't help it, as they are gone back we must go too.'

He made all the arrangements for retiring without moving from the spot on which he was standing, and it certainly did not occupy him five minutes.

G. B.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Privy Gardens, June 23, 1815.

You will be very glad to know I have a letter from my brother dated from the field of battle the morning after the action. He says, 'I have just time to tell you my head is on my shoulders, and that after the hardest fought field I ever did or probably ever shall see, we had the pleasure of licking Buonaparte most handsomely; our loss has been immense, but nothing compared to the French. The Guards had a front seat in the play, and did not disgrace themselves. We are just marching to Nivelles, the cavalry are following up the *débris* of the enemy's army, which must run *tail on end* for Lisle or Valenciennes, and cannot show fight. They say we took fifty pieces of artillery in one village last night.

'This business will go near to decide the fate of the campaign. Nothing could equal the desperation of the French attacks except the determination of the British infantry not to be beaten.

'Buonaparte, Ney, Soult, and everything which could

be collected, was in play against the Duke of Wellington, who was constantly in the heat of the action and, thank Heaven, not touched. The Prince of Orange is doing well and in no danger. He behaved famously. The list of killed and wounded will probably make you stare, but the fire both of artillery and musketry I never saw equalled.

'We have taken above 150 pieces of artillery. Buonaparte led on his own Imperial Guard against our first brigade, who beat them in two minutes. The Prussian head-quarters was on the Sambre when the last accounts came away, and there is a report that Vandamme was cut off with his corps. It is hoped that the Russians and Austrians are advancing on their side; and, in short, it seems as if nothing less than a miracle could now save Buonaparte.'

The Duke of Wellington says in his private letter that he never knew what fighting was before, and that he was obliged to exert himself to the very utmost to save the day.[1] Nothing could exceed the good conduct of the troops.

Reinforcements are going out as fast as possible, and I am in hopes from what I hear that the British have not suffered so very severely as was at first imagined. Lord Hill's division and General Colville's were not engaged. The Coldstream lost 350 killed and wounded. The 42nd, 44th, and 95th are the regiments which have been most cut up.

[1] He came up three times to Sir John Byng at Hougoumont during the action, telling him that he must hold it to the last man. (Note by the writer.)

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

War Office, June 26, 1815.

My dear Fitzharris,—I will send your letter. You will see the victory has had more important consequences than we even at first expected. I trust, however, the Allies will not be duped by this second rehearsal of the farce of abdication, but will move on straight to Paris and put *le Désiré* to bed in the Tuileries and hang Buonaparte on one of his own triumphal arches. I should be very glad to see the military part of George Bowles' letter whenever it has finished its family circulation. The Guards performed prodigies, and his account must be most interesting. Wellington said 'the troops all behaved most wonderfully,' and added 'but, good God, only think of the Guards!'

Yours affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

June 27.

P.S.—I am extremely obliged to you for Bowles' interesting and well-written account of the Battle of Waterloo, and which is the best description of it that I have yet seen. Although you desired me not to show it generally, I thought it would do Bowles no harm to show it to Sir H. Torrens, the Duke's military secretary, with whom I left it, and as he has not yet returned it to me, though he promised to do so to-day, I cannot send it you back by this day's post. I lent it to Torrens because I thought it did Bowles credit, and that it might therefore be of use to him.—P.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

La Villette, at the gates of Paris, July 6, 1815.
Received H. C. July 15.

I have been travelling so constantly since we landed at Ostend this day se'nnight, that I have hardly had time to write to anybody, but being successful so far on my journey, I will give you some account of our adventures. We had a tolerably good passage, and got our horses safe on shore, in spite of the packet's grounding on the bar and being very near lost. Two days carried us to Brussels, where we halted on the 1st, and set off the following day for Mons, taking, as you may guess, the field of battle in our way.

The extent of the line is very much shorter than I had imagined, and the principal contests took place on a front, I should think, very little exceeding a quarter of a mile, between La Haye Sainte and Hougoumont, two large farm-houses with detached inclosures, gardens, &c. standing in the middle of open cornfields, and in a small valley with a very gentle ascent on each side, but rather higher on ours, which gave the artillery the command of the ground, and to a certain degree prevented the French from acting on that point. When we went over the ground the dead were all buried, and everything except a few caps so completely cleared away, that if the corn (which was, as you may suppose, entirely destroyed) had not marked the direction of the movements, nobody would have supposed that towards 50,000 men had been killed or wounded there a fortnight before.

Nothing can exceed the kindness and attention shown by the inhabitants of Brussels and the neighbourhood to our wounded; the houses of people of every rank, and particularly the highest, have been opened to them, and their behaviour upon the whole has been so much beyond what could possibly have been expected as, I think, to call for some public expression of gratitude. Many hundreds of lives have certainly been saved, and the wounded in general are doing extremely well. Of 200 belonging to the Coldstream not one has yet died. The Belgians appear perfectly reconciled to their new Government, and the issue of this battle has, I hope, perfectly consolidated it. Their troops did not in general distinguish themselves, but those who behaved tolerably have been so much praised that they are likely to acquire some *esprit de corps*, and to distinguish themselves more another time. The Prince of Orange set them a most encouraging example, and appears extremely popular.

We entered France by Bavay, Cambray, Peronne, and Senlis, and got here early this morning, having heard that the Duke of Wellington was to enter Paris to-day: this has, however, been countermanded, but it is now said we shall go in to-morrow at six o'clock. The city is in considerable agitation, and it appears to me that some stronger measures than have yet been taken will be necessary to coerce the factious and turbulent spirit which evidently shows itself. The tricoloured cockade is still universally worn in the middle of our troops, and what is very odd, our generals seem to think that we are not supporting the cause of Louis XVIII., insomuch that the Comte de Viomesnil, who was entering Paris

this evening with a message from the King, was seized by the National Guard within the gate, and his adjutant pelted and driven into our quarters for refuge.

This is a very odd state of affairs, and certainly cannot last long. The people look very much like some of Sir Francis Burdett's friends in Palace Yard, and were this evening very much disposed to be insolent.

The troops marched out to-day, and they say are disbanding fast. A regiment of cavalry were selling their horses at two napoléons this morning to our huzzars.

Nobody knows anything of Buonaparte, the general opinion being that he is trying to escape to America.

Massena is governor and commander-in-chief of the National Guard.

The King will probably be at Paris in a few days; he is at present at Louvres, about three leagues off, waiting till this effervescence has subsided.

Buonaparte had been working hard at the fortifications, and Montmartre in particular is extremely strong; but after the passage of the Seine at St. Germains, the whole line of defence was turned, and Paris perfectly open on that side. Blucher had some hard fighting, and has lost a good many men. The French troops are quite furious, and yesterday evening got drunk and fired on one of our flags of truce, killed two or three dragoons, and wounded the officer. If this continues we shall be obliged to make some examples.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO THE EARL OF MALMESBURY.

Paris, July 10, 1815.

I have certainly been extremely unfortunate in regard to promotion, and have just now the mortification of seeing many officers in the other regiments of Guards, who are far my juniors and who have not served abroad by many years so long as myself, put over my head; and such is my peculiar luck that, if the expected brevet promotion should take place, the *Coldstream* will be the only regiment which will not profit by it. I will now proceed to more amusing subjects. Captain Elliot and my brother fortunately arrived in good time to be present at the re-entrance of Louis XVIII. into his good city of Paris. Considering all things, he was very well received, and now grown wise by experience, he will not, I hope, pursue quite the same plans he did last year.

Talleyrand remains as his Prime Minister, and though he is not exactly the person one should wish to see profit by all that has taken place during the last twenty years, yet there is probably no one so *au fait* as to the best mode of keeping a Frenchman in order. Fouché also seems likely to retain his situation. He has been in constant communication with the King for some time. The Emperors of Austria and Russia, and the King of Prussia, arrived last night, and I suppose the Congress will now re-commence their sittings in this town. Napoleon has hitherto eluded all search, and will no doubt try hard to escape to America, which is the only place in the world he would be safe in. The result of

the 18th has, however, evidently materially affected his character even with the French army.

It is certainly no small gratification to reflect that we have done all this without the assistance of either of the Emperors, and the Duke of Wellington has now nothing to wish for. The Prussians seem determined not to let slip the present opportunity of paying off old scores; they have lived at free quarters ever since they entered France, and plundered systematically every town and village within their reach. Blucher has a mind to destroy the bridge of Jena and the column in the Place Vendôme, which was erected in honour of the campaigns of 1806 and 1807, and was made of the guns captured from the Austrians and Prussians during those years, which circumstance certainly gives him a fair right to it. He has also levied a contribution equal to that Buonaparte made Berlin pay, and has insisted on the Parisians clothing his whole army, all which will be done immediately, thus Prussia will not be much out of pocket by this war.

We are proceeding on a far more liberal principle and do not talk of requiring anything, unless it be some old colours now hung up in the Hôtel des Invalides, and which were, I believe, taken at the battle of Fontenoy. I fancy, however, that we have kept our army tolerably cheap since we crossed the frontier, and our commissariat accounts will not prove quite so expensive as they used to do in Spain. Never having seen Paris till now, I am not a very good judge of the various improvements which have taken place under Napoleon.

From every appearance, however, I do not much wonder at his popularity here, as this city has evidently

gained by the losses and misery of the rest of the world. This was by no means the case with the country we passed through between this and Belgium, which was a striking contrast to that latter country. The villages were wretched and hardly better than those in Portugal, and the population has evidently most materially suffered.

Until we reached Paris we saw no symptom of any feeling in favour of Buonaparte.

CAPTAIN G. BOWLES TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Paris, August 9, 1815.
Received H. C. August 16.

I own I have so little good (or I ought to say so much bad) taste as to be a good deal disappointed with this far-famed capital, which, with the exception of a few public buildings, is no more to be compared with London than France is with England.

Some of the most curious specimens of French ingenuity are now on their way to Berlin, amongst others, a very considerable number of models of the different fortified places in old France, which are most minutely finished, and on a very large scale—some of them six inches to one hundred yards. The whole of the Musée d'Artillerie has also been seized by the Prussians, who, altogether, have paid themselves pretty handsomely for the expense of this campaign. We have followed our usual system, and taken nothing.

The whole of the allied army excepting ourselves live at free quarters either in money or *kind*, and we pay for the whole. John Bull is certainly a most

liberal sort of fellow; the misfortune of this is, that we are only looked on after all as most egregious blockheads by both friends and foes.

Everything was settled for the dispersion of the different armies into cantonments, and a general move was to have taken place two days ago.

The Guards were to have remained and been quartered in Paris, the rest of the infantry to have been sent into Normandy.

For some reason or other this arrangement is put a stop to, and we all remain encamped in the Bois de Boulogne and that neighbourhood for some time longer.

This of course has given rise to all sorts of reports, and rows, plots, &c. were immediately anticipated.

Certainly, in this, as in all other great towns, there are plenty of vagabonds, who, having nothing to lose, are always willing to join in a row in the hope of plunder. But we have much too large a force in France at present for anything really serious to be apprehended. Poor Louis is, it must be confessed, most decidedly unpopular with all parties. The Jacobins can never be his friends, and by throwing himself a second time into their hands, he has completely disgusted all the old Royalists, and he now drives round the town without one living being crying *Vive le roi!* Indeed, so decidedly unpopular is he, that the prevailing idea now is that he cannot maintain himself, and odds are offered that the Duc d'Orléans is King of France[1] before this time twelve months. The Duchesse d'Angoulême is the only one of the

[1] He became so in 1830.

Bourbons who carries the smallest weight. The Duc de Berri is detested, and neither Monsieur or the Duc d'Angoulême have character enough to be of any consequence.

The moment we leave the country something will take place in the shape of a revolution, unless Louis acts with infinitely more vigour than he at present seems inclined to do.

No one example has yet been made, and there seems to be even a doubt whether Labédoyère (who after Ney is the most notorious of the late traitors) will be executed or not.

I own I shall not be sorry when we leave Paris. I have now seen all the *Lions*, and begin to be most heartily sick of dining at coffee-houses and going to plays. The assemblage of Emperors, Kings, Princes, Marshals, and Generals is, as you may suppose, very considerable.

Strasbourg, Metz, Valenciennes, and Lisle will certainly (*on dit*) be garrisoned by the Allies for a considerable time to come, and this the French are completely prepared for. Great secrecy is, however, preserved as to all other arrangements. The Jacobins of course take advantage of this to propagate all sorts of rumours of partitions, &c. Amongst other absurdities they have contrived to make a number of the troops believe that we have taken one of Buonaparte's brothers for him, and that Napoleon will make his appearance again when we go. I am not very sanguine as to promotion, but I shall be rather disappointed if I do not in any way profit by the expected brevet. The majority[1] was perfectly a matter of course, from being

[1] A brevet majority made him a major in the army.

included in Lord Wellington's list, and is of no sort of use to me in any way excepting as being rather a feather.

LADY FRANCES COLE[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Paris, August 20, 1815.
Received H. C. August 26.

My visit here is a very entertaining one. The place in itself affords an almost inexhaustible source of sights, and under its present circumstances *must* be particularly interesting.

Both my mother and I have written so fully to my father that I shall not repeat myself to you; indeed, a real description of all I have seen would be difficult for me to write and dull for you to read. You will see by the French papers that Labédoyère is actually executed; it is the first act of justice on the part of the French Government. The King has had much to go through on this occasion; Labédoyère was of a good family, and is connected with the persons of rank who are nearest and most about the King's person by his marriage with a relation of the family of Damas. He was himself said to be a *mauvais sujet*, but his wife was a good sort of woman and attached to him.

The King, aware of the effect her solicitations might have on him, desired she might be told that there could be no hope of mercy, and that he wished to be spared telling her this himself. She could not, however, be prevailed upon to resist the attempt, and as he went

[1] Sister to Lord Fitzharris.

out yesterday she threw herself at his feet, begging only for his life, whatever other punishment might be inflicted.

The King was greatly overcome, but remained firm, and the wretched man was taken to the Champ de Mars about five o'clock and shot by some of the corps of Veterans.

There were none but French soldiers present, and no great concourse of people, though the execution was a public one. There was no appearance of disturbance, and but little demonstration of feeling on the part of the people. He behaved with great firmness, and whilst some observed that his sentence was just, others admired his composure under its execution.

Ney was brought into Paris a couple of days ago, and has, I hear, shown great violence and indignation at being placed in the Conciergerie. He is to be tried very soon, and it seems the opinion of most people that he too will be shot.

The anti-royal party say that both he and Labédoyère acted from the impulse of the moment, not from any preconcerted plan, and that therefore (though they were guilty of breaking their oath of allegiance) Ney did not blacken his treachery by intentionally deceiving the King by what he said when he went to command the army.[1] I cannot believe this, and am convinced he knew from the first what was likely to happen. I have not heard what is to become of Maret[2] and those who were taken

[1] He is said to have boasted that he would bring Napoleon to him in an iron cage.

[2] He was created Duc de Bassano by Napoleon in 1811—exiled by Louis XVIII., after the Restoration in 1815; and returned to France in 1820.

up at the same time with him. We have heard nothing more of the destination of the army, and I suppose shall have very short notice when we do move. It seems the universal wish of the French that we should remain in Paris rather than the Prussians, whose presence is dreadfully chafing to them, and who certainly (though the accounts of their depredations are greatly exaggerated) have done, and are doing every day, very vexatious and oppressive things. We, on the contrary, are not guilty of the smallest disorder, and the Duke has shown himself as great in the discipline of his army as in leading it in battle. Amongst the Allies, however, Paris will not escape spoiling entirely, and I own I cannot regret that the French should suffer a little on the point which most nearly affects them—their vanity.

The Bavarians, Prussians, Spaniards, and I believe the Prince of Orange, are laying in their claims for a great number of the pictures in the Louvre, and the former have already taken down more than 100.

They have also seized some beautiful models of the fortified towns which were at the Hôtel des Invalides, but I do not hear that we are to take back any memento at all of our march into Paris.

The Guards are encamped in the Bois de Boulogne, the 52nd, a regiment of Highlanders, and some others in the Champs Élysées; and it is difficult to say how extraordinary a feeling it is to see them stationed there, whilst the 'Rotten Row' of Paris, the Allée of Neuilly, is full of cabriolets, droitskeys, German carriages of all descriptions, and officers of all nations riding about quite at their ease, and with no apparent disposition on the part of the French to molest them. They are,

however, in reality suffering enough to make them remember for a long time the extraordinary events of the last year.

Every proprietor of a house in Paris of any description, whether loyal or disloyal, is obliged to lodge whatever and whoever is billeted upon him, is called upon for daily very considerable contributions for the general maintenance of the armies, and many of them have to suffer infinitely more at their country houses.

Withal I do not think them well disposed towards the King, yet they have no confidence in the people; for although the army is completely disbanded and disorganised, the spirit remains.

There is to be a review of 150,000 Russians on the 10th of September.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM BOWLES, R.N., TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Paris, August 20, 1815.
Received August 28.

Everything really interesting is kept a profound secret, and the reports of the day being generally contradicted in a few hours are not safe articles to deal in. You will probably receive from Lady M—— bitter philippics against the Prussians, who, I think, are certainly carrying the joke rather far, and behaving in a manner I should be sorry to see imitated by the English.

All I hope is that everything will be settled and the allied troops withdrawn from the interior of the country before winter sets in, and the difficulty of keeping large bodies of troops together makes it necessary to divide them.

Then it may be feared that the inhabitants, irritated by their sufferings and encouraged by the small number of their enemies, will attempt insurrections, and produce a sort of national war. However, I hope there is prudence enough amongst us to avoid so evident a danger, and what the French are suffering at present is only just enough to deter them from any line of conduct which might give occasion to a third visit. They are certainly at present disgorging plentifully. The pictures in the Louvre are disappearing as fast as possible.

All the German towns are claiming and receiving them, and I hear the Deputies from Naples and other parts of Italy may be immediately expected.

It is said that we are to have some part of the spoil, but hitherto our conduct has been perfectly disinterested, as we even refused to take the models of Brest, Toulon, &c. when the Prussians were carrying off all the towns in French Flanders, Alsace, and others. They have completely emptied the Musée d'Artillerie, a collection something like the Tower, where the armour of all remarkable persons had been deposited, and a very complete series of the successive improvements of all kinds of warlike instruments.

The poor King is in a miserable situation between his foreign and domestic enemies: he has, I understand, completely given himself up to the direction of his Ministers, and does pretty much as they desire. The newspapers say that Labédoyère was shot this morning. Ney will probably follow in a few days, and after him the present idea is there will not be many more examples. Paris is perfectly quiet, but this is rather to be attributed to the immense number of troops by which

they are surrounded than to the good dispositions of the Parisians. If the King is wise he will reside as little as possible amongst them, but inhabit St. Cloud till Versailles can be got ready. The English are coming over in swarms, they filled the whole house the other night at the Duke of Wellington's ball.

The Sovereigns are all very quiet, and live very much together, but give no entertainments.

1816.

The letters of this year describe the state of Paris at the beginning of the second Restoration, during its occupation by the allied armies.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Stanhope Street, January 5, 1816.

I am very glad to find by your note of the 3rd inst., which I have received this morning, that you mean to come over to us at Broadlands on Monday. The effort must I am sure be painful, but I am also certain that you will find your mind much relieved when it is over. I will certainly pay you another visit before I return to this place, and I really am glad to have an opportunity of saying how much I admired the greatness of mind (the expression is not stronger than I mean it) which I saw you displaying during my last visit.[1]

My dear Fitzharris, yours affectionately,

Palmerston.

[1] After Lady Fitzharris's death, which occurred on September 4, 1815.

LORD LANSDOWNE TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Naples, February 12, 1816.
Received, London, May 17.

I received your letter at Rome, and should have thanked you for it before, if I had not been waiting for a better opportunity than the post, which I have had lately reason to believe rather uncertain, and which Lord Gower's return to England now affords me. After spending a few months at Rome, without exhausting the endless sources of interest in which it abounds, beyond all that I had conceived of it before, we came on to Naples the last week in January; and are now enjoying the most delightful winter, or rather spring, in a house close to the sea, commanding the most beautiful views of Capri, Pausilippo, &c., and last though not least (recalling England and English ideas to one's mind) of the 'Tagus' and 'Wasp,' which are anchored within a quarter of a mile. In the former the Mintos arrived as passengers a few days ago from Genoa with their family, quite well. We found Lady Douglas here, not so well as she was at Rome, but she has been getting better since our arrival. I hope you have heard from her, as I know she has written to you. After the extraordinary beauty of the site, the most interesting object here is the excavation of Pompeii, which was prosecuted with great activity by the French, and is still continued. Besides the streets and long line of family monuments, there are now completely opened an amphitheatre inferior only to the Colosseum, and a large forum with a magnificent court of justice at one end,

and a temple at the other. The profusion of pillars is immense, and the capitals of many of them most carefully finished. It would seem that these buildings were just erecting at the moment the eruption took place. The number of objects in bronze, pottery, &c. was so great that, although the first collection was carried away to Palermo and is not yet returned, the excavators have found another very extensive. With a good and steady administration of government this ought to be the most flourishing of countries, with the means of producing double its own subsistence, little or no debts, and no necessity for a large military force; but there is a want of probity and good faith in all classes, from the court down to the lowest of the people, which infects every branch of the public service. The best appointment the King has made since his return is that of the Austrian General Nugent to the command of the army with full powers. He is a man of considerable ability, and, I believe, equal honour. I am glad to hear you are again in Parliament,[1] and hope it will tempt you to occasional visits to London. If you are there late in the spring I shall hope to profit by it this year, as we shall probably return soon after Easter, as it is very inconvenient to me, on account of private business (to say nothing of public), to prolong my absence.

Yours very sincerely.

LANSDOWNE.

[1] Member for Wilton.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cambray, February 13, 1816.
Received February 26.

Now that we shall no longer have the aid of extraordinary 'Gazettes,' &c. to keep John Bull in good humour, I much fear that the efforts of our *patriotic* Opposition will be infinitely greater and more dangerous than during war and victories. The correspondence carried on between Sir Robert Wilson and Lord Grey and Holland plainly proves the real views of the party to which they belong * * * * I am by no means inclined to croak, but I cannot help shuddering at what a few years' peace may do in England. The rapid growth of Methodism, the encouragement of which is now interwoven with the Opposition system, by making the lower classes conceive themselves, in point of religion at least, superior to the upper, must have a decidedly bad political effect, and taxation and Parliamentary Reform are such never-failing weapons in the hands of those who stick at nothing to gain their object, that I cannot but rejoice that we have *here* a force, which *may*, though God forbid it should, be first wanted in its own country.

Everything must depend on the firmness and wisdom of Parliament, and the absence of any sound constitutional strength must be deplored. In this country, in spite of the pretended accounts from Paris and Lyons, with which the English papers are crammed, I do not believe there is the smallest probability of any serious disturbance. Indeed, considering the numbers

of discontented *mauvais sujets* who were let loose by the disbanding the army, it is a matter of surprise that so very few even partial rows have taken place. During the last six or seven months I was in the constant practice of walking about the streets of Paris, sometimes in but generally out of uniform, at all hours of the night, and I can safely affirm that no town within my knowledge was so perfectly quiet, and this without the appearance of any over-abundant police. Louis is beyond all doubt possessed of excellent abilities himself, and he has now formed as good a Ministry as possible. The occupation of almost all the frontier towns, and the presence of 150,000 foreign troops, must render any attempt to overset the Government perfectly hopeless, and before the time comes for our departure, I have no doubt they will be quite strong enough to walk alone. This town (Cambray) bears very evident marks of the state of poverty to which the *blockade of England* by *Buonaparte* reduced all the towns in France.

There is not at present one individual here sufficiently rich to keep a carriage. Twenty years ago there were thirty or forty.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cambray, June 8, 1816.

Ever since my arrival here I have been involved in one continual round of dissipation We have had a dozen excursions to the different towns and villages in the neighbourhood by day, and constant balls and parties by night. The departure, however, of head-quarters to Paris, which took place two days ago, has reduced

us to a state of quiet, in which we shall probably remain for some time. The Duke of Wellington talks of remaining at Paris a month or six weeks, and on his return establishes himself at a large château he has hired about twelve miles from hence in the neighbourhood of Castelet, and where he intends remaining the whole of the autumn. He talks of encamping us all as soon as the harvest is over, and our reviews will probably equal (if they do not excel) those of yore at Berlin, and I should not wonder if they were to be almost as numerously attended.

I never saw any one so well or in such spirits as our Duke; no schoolboy was ever more eager for fun of every description than he is. He has sent for a pack of hounds, and as the country in the neighbourhood of Castelet is better than about this place, we have hopes of tolerable sport, and between hunting and drilling we shall be able to keep ourselves in wind.

The late events at Grenoble have afforded a very fair pretext for some few severe measures, which the French Government have availed themselves of, and they are in consequence infinitely stronger than before. I really begin to think that John Bull seems to have a wonderful propensity to *burning* and *destroying*, I trust that there is no danger of Wiltshire or Hampshire following the example of Suffolk and Norfolk.[1] The account of the '*main body* of the insurgents having been totally routed' made us stare a little. The necessity of a *few* soldiers in England will not now be denied. What do you say to the appointment of

[1] Alluding to the agricultural riots in Norfolk, Suffolk, Huntingdon, and Cambridgeshire.

Canning? I think his first appearance in the House will be a trying one. I suppose Lord Castlereagh and himself will walk in arm in arm, or perhaps if they were to waltz round the table together it might have an equally good effect.

LADY MALMESBURY[1] TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Paris, Rue de la Planche, July 4, 1816.

We arrived here at five o'clock on Tuesday without any adventures, and in the same time and, barring the sea, with as much ease as if I had gone to Minto. There are not many English of fashion or indeed of any sort here, and upon the road they said very few had passed; so the exaggeration about emigration must be very great, as this is the high road everywhere. I was very much struck with the elasticity with which everything since last year was restored to its natural state, particularly in the neighbourhood of Paris, where you would not suppose there had been a soldier these hundred years. The crops everywhere were beautiful and flourishing to the greatest degree, houses repaired, whitened, and straightened, and a quiet placid air over everything. We were through one village the day of its saint's fête, and they were dancing away on the green, with tables all set out in a most picturesque manner, exactly like a Teniers. The Duke of Wellington embarked for England the day we left Calais. I asked A. Paget the reason, he said he *believed really that his health was not good*; but there was a very singu-

[1] Lady Malmesbury was daughter of Sir George Amyand, and sister to the Countess of Minto.

lar adventure took place at the ball he gave the Duc de Berri last Thursday. Old Madame de Brunoy, who lives next door, was looking out of her window at the illuminations in his gardens and saw a flame coming out of a cellar. She immediately sent in word, and her servants met with an English valet de chambre, who went down and found that the *grille* had been sawed through, a parcel of cartouches thrown in, and a train of gunpowder in a rag laid towards them. Only one or two had caught and set fire to a table by them. He called another Englishman; they got water and put it out, said nothing till the company were gone, and then told the Duke. He treated it with contempt till the man begged he would go down himself, and he would find things as he had stated: the Duke accordingly did so. I was told also that several men disguised as women had been taken up near the house. I asked R. what he thought of it. He said that the intentions were to the same purpose as at Schwarzenburg's fête for the marriage of Marie-Louise, to plunder and commit depredations during the confusion of a fire probably; but other people seemed inclined to believe that, as all the Royal Family (excepting the King and Madame d'Angoulême) were there, and the Duke, these people intended their destruction also. It was certainly an awkward story. In Augereau's papers (after his death) a *brouillon* was found in his own hand, written to some Jacobin, stating many of their ideas; namely, that the best thing would be to place the Duke of Orleans [1] on the throne, shutting up the King (after destroying all the others), in

[1] Afterwards King Louis-Philippe.

order to be a check upon him by his not being legitimate.[1] Augereau died at a château not far from Paris.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Paris, July 7, 1816.

On Thursday we went to the Français in the Loge des Gentilshommes de la Chambre with the Duc de Duras. After a little time in bounced the Duc and Duchesse de Berri; he turned round, and in a *ton de charretier* exclaimed, 'Je croyais avoir donné des ordres à mes gens.' You must know he has the box opposite, but he chose to take possession now and for evermore of the *King's private box*, which this is, and had announced this for after Saturday, but the whim seized him on Friday.

The Duc de Duras, who is *fier comme Artaban*, looked indignant, and said, 'Monseigneur avait dit que c'était après samedi; *au reste, voilà miladi Malmesbury!*' The *brute* looked in my face, gave a *bob* with his head, never spoke a word, but pushed on, and let us go out of the box without the common civility of a man to a woman. The Duc de Duras' box is over on the other side. The applause at all the spectacles where the passages are appropriate are *à tout rompre*, and I only hope it may not be great cry and little wool. It is to be hoped that the King will live very long, and Monsieur and the Duc d'Angoulême both survive this man, who it seems treats everybody in the same manner, and will be either dethroned or a tyrant. The Duchesse is very like the

[1] Alluding to the infamous declaration of his father Égalité, that he himself was a coachman's son.

Emperor and Austrian family, and altogether reminded me of the Duchess of York in her little figure *childish to excess*, but civil and pleasing they say. I pity her sincerely, for there never was a more disgusting object than he is getting, and everything else.

Pozzo di Borgo called on me yesterday; it is impossible to be more eloquent or amusing than he is, and he has a clearness and energy of expression quite peculiar. He says (what is quite true) that our English Jacobins trotting about, giving their opinions and admiring Buonaparte, are still doing more mischief than can be undone by any efforts.

Robert made us go to see the most exquisite statue I ever beheld, and producing more effect on one's feelings than any of the antique, not excepting the Apollo. It is a Magdalen of Canova's, destined many years ago as a present to his parish church. When the French came, he buried it; and when he dug it up again was so poor that he sold it to M. Sommariva, a rich Italian, who has one of the finest collections of pictures I ever saw; another at a country house called Épinay, about two leagues from Paris; and a third at his château in Italy. I think I remember him at Naples. This Magdalen has an expression of countenance, form, and attitude, which to this moment is quite present to my mind's eye, and was actually affecting. If there had been Magdalens in Phidias' time, he could not have excelled this.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Paris, July 10, 1816.

The château at St. Germain has for a great number of years been merely a barrack. The latter part of the road is pretty. The moulin de Marly is in a wretched state, and I conclude will be replaced by a steam-engine when they can afford it. In the evening F. would go to see Mdlle. Mars in the 'Philosophe marié,' a very moderate play: she acted also in the 'Partie de Chasse.' Nothing ever was as bad as Talma in 'Henri IV.;' he acts just like a marionnette.

Yesterday M. de Noailles gave me a dinner. Nothing could be better or more *recherché*. All in her are cleverness and intelligence, for there is nothing in the world she does not understand. When she was in emigration at Altona she got a grant of some land, and between herself and a servant (whose conduct is beyond belief) she cultivated it, had cows, sheep, pigs, and contrived to support herself and to have the very best of everything of the kind; and this woman was born to 12,000*l.* a year, heiress herself to it, beautiful and clever as possible, her husband Intendant of Bordeaux and Sainborge, and of course living magnificently. We had a soiréé afterwards of about twenty people, and she never sat down from five till half-past one (excepting at dinner), and was here as brisk as a bee by twelve o'clock this morning, not a bit tired. In the court of the house where she lives she has a little bit of a garden full of the most beautiful flowers, which she cultivates herself and understands perfectly, never forgetting a

name, and has in her room the most beautiful carpet and chairs of her own work it is possible to see. I call her Ninon always.

The National Guard on Monday when the King passed them in review had each two lilies on their muskets, and they calculated 40,000 lilies were used by them alone. The gardens are still full of them, and they say they never were so fine. It is certain that they are perfectly gigantic. In general the beauty of the flowers is quite striking, and the excellence of the fruits and the excessive low price of each. Enormous white strawberries, excepting hautbois which I suppose are not ripe, excellent cherries and white currants, and all so perfectly ripe. Whole fields of roses mixed with the corn in stripes and other sorts of cultivation make the whole environs look like a garden, for it is all cultivated in narrow strips of each species of production. I am told that this is nothing to Tourraine, where twenty-five greengages were offered to G. for three sous (one penny). The rainy season has made the grass as green as in England, but as yet no mischief is done, unless it be to the vines in flower.

July 11.

I am just returned from my audience; the King looks ten years younger and better than last year and *wears boots*, and indeed is quite brisk. I passed about twenty minutes with him; he enquired after you.

We dined yesterday at the English ambassador's,[1] all very handsome.

[1] Sir Charles Stuart, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

July 14, 1816.

I have taken the desperate resolution of going from hence all round the South of France by Lyons, Avignon, Marseilles, Bordeaux, &c., which is the short road by Tandsbach to this place, and we shall give up staying here at all beyond a few days. This, upon a strict calculation, carries us an extra 550 miles ; but then our plan will be completely fulfilled, and we shall be in those provinces at the finest season, the autumn, and during the vintage. By not stopping here we shall equally be at home in the beginning of winter. I had my audience of the King on Thursday, and was as handsomely received as possible. I had also that from Monsieur on Saturday evening, and it appears to me that his ultra-royalist ideas are improving ; he talks of the *nécessité de marcher avec les Chambres*, that all last year the Government were in the minority, &c. We dined on Saturday at R. Fagel's. Pozzo was there, and I had a great deal of conversation with him, and even you would have been forced to admit that what he said was full of good sense. He has invited us to dinner on Thursday, so we stay till Friday, as I want to see his house. Oudinot, the Duc de Reggio, called Le Bayard de l'armée française, is universally respected by all parties. He made no fortune, although he rose from a plain grenadier merely by merit. He has a most excellent countenance, and I had a long conversation with him, in which he showed very good sense and soldier-like manner, and appeared to me to be a sort of *Admiral*

Greig à la française; he told me 'qu'il n'avait jamais combattu contre les Anglais excepté au siége de Gibraltar,' when he went as a common soldier.

On Monday we went to see a somnambule at a gentleman's house, not a professor, and I was very much amused; and to Sir Charles Stuart's in the evening. Yesterday we went to see Bagatelle, a very pretty English villa, and a beautiful little pavilion formerly Monsieur's, which he has given to the Duc de Berri. The verdure is as fine this year as it can be in England owing to the rain. About Paris little damage is done except to the hay, but dreadful accounts from the provinces. All the vintage in Burgundy annihilated, and, as the Duc de Richelieu said yesterday evening here, it was worse than five or six revolutions. They dread the impossibility of continuing the contributions, and the consequences of that impossibility. He came here unluckily when other people were here, and of course I could have no conversation; but he appeared to me singularly indiscreet, talking before three or four French people quite in despair, that this and England were declining countries, Russia the rising one, that it was the course of nature in kingdoms like other things, and must be so. Now all this may be true, but *Jean qui pleure* is not fit for a prime minister in power at any time, but particularly now. He is like a tied-up dog, tugging against his chain from the desire of getting away, quite in Caze's hands (as well as the King), who, in fact, entirely governs France at this moment. Altogether, it all goes like a rusty cart-wheel, creaking and hitching at every step, but still it will get home by and by, and get oiled at leisure. I dine to day at Pozzo's, and my new acquaintance Oudinot is invited.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Preigny, July 26, 1816.

This is the centre from which all branch out to the different parts of Europe. Our day's journey yesterday was through the Mountain. The latter part made by Buonaparte most wonderfully, so that you may trot up every part. It is the commencement of the Simplon Road so famous, and really it is bad for one to see what great works that creature performed; whereas all the magnificent roads in France are going to rack and ruin, because they think themselves too poor to dig in the huts made by the armies, which would not altogether cost 1,000*l*. This is very bad policy, inasmuch as it will cost another year one hundred times as much. The sudden breaking upon the lake, and all this country, from the top here is magnificent; but we had unfortunately a bad day, raining and sleet, and could see but little. The ruin occasioned by the floods here is so great, that already wheaten bread is forbidden. The vines now in flower only.

This country, le Pays de Gex, is restored to Geneva. The Pays de Vaud becomes a canton of itself, in consequence of a promise made by Alexander to Monsieur de la Harpe his old preceptor, who belongs to it, and it is said to be in a turbulent state; for as it was formerly quite a feudal system there the nobles suffered very much during the revolution, returned to something like their original state during Buonaparte's time, and do not at all like being nearly governed, or at least equalised, by their former serfs and vassals. I never

heard of anything equal to the civility and hospitality of the neighbourhood, and Madame Pigot (who I never saw in my life), black Pigot's widow, a Mdlle. Bontemps, has been twice a day arranging our house, and begging and insisting on our sending for everything we wished for from her house; and yesterday insisted that we should go *first to hers*, with my sister, till ours was made perfectly comfortable. This surprises us English, but it seems is quite natural here.

CAPTAIN BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cambray, July 29, 1816.

I returned on the 24th from an excursion into the Netherlands, where I passed a not unpleasant ten days with the Richmonds at Brussels, and from thence, as you may believe, paid a visit to Waterloo. Fortunately we chose the only fine day we have had some time, and as four of the party—Maitland, March, George Lennox, and myself—had never been there since the action, it was doubly interesting. Excepting at Hougoumont and La Haye Sainte, scarcely any traces now remain of what took place there thirteen months ago. The crops as may be expected are very luxuriant.

There is a mixture of feelings in visiting a spot of this sort which can hardly be described, and on the whole I do not think I shall ever feel inclined to repeat my visit. Had not the weather been so regularly bad we should before this have been living under canvas, orders having been given to encamp us on the glacis. What end or purpose is proposed to be answered by this arrangement no one can devise.

We are neither more together, nor are we nearer our exercising ground, or, in short, do we gain anything excepting moving from dry, airy, and healthy barracks into a wet and damp camp. Agues and dysentery will naturally follow. It is a whim of the Duke of Wellington, and nobody ventures to hint to him that we shall suffer from it.

It is moreover particularly hard on the officers, on account of the necessary expense it puts them to, as no allowance whatever is to be made for camp equipment; and, on the whole, in this instance, we feel ourselves fully entitled to use our national privilege and grumble excessively.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Chambery, September 8, 1816.

Fanny Temple found a letter here from Henry, who expected to be here about the 8th or 9th; but I give him to the 12th, and I hope we shall get away Saturday the 14th. He is so hurried he will not stay at Geneva above a day I should think, as he means to be in England the 7th or 8th of October. We have got Mr. Playfair (the famous) here and his nephew. He is, I think, one of the most democratical and Broughamical of all the Reviewers, approves Sir Robert Wilson, &c. It is strange that men of science have been all along the worst disposed in these revolutionary times. He has an insufferable coxcomb of a nephew (an army surgeon) with him, a thoroughpaced Jacobin, and ought not to be allowed to belong to any garrison, or even a regiment. They go to the Mountains to morrow.

The night before my arrival this house was broken open. My sister was awakened by a noise in the next room, heard footsteps, had the courage to get up and lock the door, and in doing this heard the man almost touch it; she had a bell in her room, went into her sitting-room and rang that, and returned to her bed, thought it might not have been heard, got up and rang it again, and Renard her servant came; they hunted about with another servant and pistols, and discovered that the drawing-room window was open, and the outside shutter, and also those of a passage window on the other side the house. Upon hearing the noise of the locking the door, the man had escaped through the drawing-room window, and there were the marks of the footsteps on both sides in the sand and gravel. They had taken a ladder from the courtyard to get in. My sister being so soon alarmed they had no time to take anything, but the same night they broke into George's larder and carried off the meat, butter, &c.

Several houses here have been robbed since I went away.

I am sadly afraid by this dawdling for Harry[1] I shall lose my visit to the Turnbulls altogether, as they will have quitted before I can get there.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Chambery, September 13, 1816.

Sir G. Cornewall and his wife are here; she never looks at anything, but works in the carriage all day long. I trust this will raise her in your opinion. They

[1] Lord Palmerston.

stay altogether a fortnight, and then return through France. She will not even go to Chamouni. Only think of Renard, my sister's invaluable servant, having come from Princess ——.[1] He was her servant for a considerable time, contriving to send her food by his sister, and would certainly have saved her, had not her own femme de chambre denounced her. He had the pleasure in his turn of denouncing this to the present Government, and depriving her of the pensions and advantages she had derived from her wickedness.

I never saw such a servant, he is everything in the world that can be conceived, and activity itself.

I may safely say I shall *carry* my man home again, for he is just the pendant to my trunk; does not keep awake a moment, and is actually incapable of the slightest exertion, though honest and an excellent accountant.

Now I have seen so much of the universal stupidity of this nation[2] I am not so much surprised at his.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Avignon, September 20, 1816.

I hope Catherine got my letter from—— of the 16th. We were detained there till twelve o'clock by the eternal repairs of my carriage, and by that means, as we did not choose to travel in these parts after dark, we slept in the most horrible place possible. There was a meeting of Royalists there, whose loyal songs, dances, and huzzas baffle all description. As to sleep in the inns at this place, it is perfectly out of the question,

[1] Name illegible. [2] The Savoyards.

besides the noises of all descriptions, the fleas, and above all the flies, which are quite like Pharaoh's plague, made it impossible; not to mention the heat, which is very great indeed, 82° all day yesterday, but the air is so fine and light that it is really not at all oppressive like heat in another climate. We slept last night at an excellent inn at Montelimart.

We go to-morrow to Aix, and early next morning to Marseilles. Hitherto, excepting the sky and the setting sun, we have had no reward for our labour, for I never saw a more barren, wretched, and ugly country than the whole road from Lyons. Nothing but *des montagnes pilées* and white limestone hills, no trees or verdure of any sort, quite like an Arabian desert. Mr. Turnbull (the consul at Marseilles), whom we saw yesterday evening, gave us little hopes of anything better till we get far south-west beyond Fontaine. The post here is remarkably well served, and you change horses in five or ten minutes, but the depth of dust is many inches. What is very singular is that till within four posts of this place they have had torrents of rain all summer, and from thence here and so on, not a drop scarcely since May, but the weather less hot than usual. If one never touched the earth this would be quite living in nectar as to air, but the nuisances take off all the zest.

My face is like Sheridan's with the bugs last night. Gnats, flies, stinks of every kind—garlic making the general perfume. If English cleanliness existed here it would be quite enjoyable, but as to beauty there is certainly none.

We are lodged in the hotel where Marshal Brune

was murdered last year.[1] The woman of the house (a most agreeable person) has just given me the history. He arrived with passports and all in due form to go and beg the King's pardon. The mob assembled and demanded him; the people of the hotel (which is the post) endeavoured to save him by barricading the door, but they got over the roofs, and after a siege of four hours shot him and threw him into the Rhone. They saved his aide-de-camp, servant, and effects. It was also at the door of this hotel that the mob assembled to wait for Buonaparte on his way to Elba, and would certainly have murdered him, when Colonel Campbell contrived to stop late, and at another part of the town sent for the horses round and disappointed them; for which I must say he has the blood of all the soldiers who fell in 1815 to answer for.

People are calming in the south, and I don't hear of any loud disapprobation of the dissolution of the Chambers. Mrs. D—— will always ask the postilions, 'why they stop,' and gets answered in consequence frankly *sans détour*.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Montpelier, September 26, 1816.

I wrote to C—— from Marseilles, which we left on Monday morning. We retraced back our steps to Orgon; then turned off and slept at St. Rémy. On Tuesday morning we proceeded to visit the famous Pont de Gard near a place called La Joux opposite Rin-

[1] By the Royalists.

coulins, and which indeed fully repaid us for going three or four posts out of our direct road to see it. This is the most magnificent monument of antiquity, and stands in a piece of wild scenery (for this country) well suited to it. The ground covered with rosemary, lavender, and aromatics that spread much fragrance, even burnt up as they are now. It is in excellent preservation and as likely to stand 2,000 years longer, if the world lasts as long, as it has done for 1835, for it dates from 19 years before Christ. We then proceeded to Nismes, which has answered best of all. The amphitheatre is remarkably fine though much *dégradé*. The circle is complete and the greater part of the arches.

It is about one-third of the size of the Coliseum, but upon the same plan. It is used occasionally for bull fights still, and last year a great fête was given in it to the Duc d'Angoulême. The most perfect thing is the Maison Carrée, certainly the most perfect temple I ever saw, not having being at Pœstum. The capitals of the columns, rich Corinthian, are as sharp as if done 100 years ago, and the whole, though small, quite beautiful.

Whenever they dig at Nismes they find antiquities, as it was formerly a splendid colony; mosaics everywhere. The town is a handsome one, and has no bad smells whatever; the streets wide and trees in them; a very handsome Palais de Justice built by Buonaparte. The fountain of Diana restored by Louis XV. stands in a very handsome garden, and is a most beautiful work, having been made upon the very substructure of the Romans and done in excellent taste. In this garden stand the remains of a very pretty temple of Diana. Altogether Nismes is a very pretty place; the country

from thence here richly cultivated with olives and mulberries, but flat and ugly and without trees. We are lodged in a most horrible inn,[1] and I should be for quitting it at daybreak, but Fanny wants to see the only thing there is to see—a public walk.

It appears to be a hideous town, and the screaming and noise excessive.

We live upon grapes and figs, and I am almost tired of them. We bought five pounds (that is six English) of the former to-day very fine for ten sous, that is one penny English, a pound, and two dozen figs for two French sous the whole ; but the inns are not at all cheap, in proportion, and the animals terrifying.

LORD LANSDOWNE TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Venice, October 11, 1816.

My dear Fitzharris,—I promised you some account of our southern progress, and I know you will be glad to hear that our journey, subject to the usual vicissitudes of weather, of which we have had rather more than our share this summer, has been prosperous, and has amply rewarded our curiosity. In England I fear that agriculture must have felt the effects of the long reign of Jupiter Pluvius, but here they have been tremendous.

The Governor of Venice told me yesterday he had a valuation of the loss suffered by the inundations of the river, amounting to seven millions of francs in the Paduan, and three in the Ferrarese territory. You probably saw Venice when you were in Italy and in a

[1] Now the excellent Hotel of Mecklenburgh.

state of less advanced degradation than it is at present, the palaces are most of them unoccupied, or converted into public offices, and those that are, give rather the idea of splendid misery than enjoyment. The French had directed their attention almost entirely to the naval arsenal, which employed several thousand persons, but now these establishments are reduced and the number of wretches without the means of subsistence is dreadful.

The only branch of industry not likely to fail, frivolous as it appears, is the manufacture of glass beads (a very ingenious process) peculiar to this place, and for which the seraglios of the East maintain a very steady demand. I had before a very decided opinion in favour of the restoration of works of art at Paris to their ancient owners (the best done I think of all our arrangements there), but I never felt it so strongly as since I have seen the effects produced by it. In Flanders it is perhaps still more striking than here, where I saw crowds collected before the newly arrived Reubens in the churches, in a state of the greatest delight; and certainly for the pictures themselves, there could be no comparison as to their good looks at home or abroad.

If Venice has lost in appearance, Milan has gained in the last twenty years. Fortunately what the French did there was not in their usual bad taste, but under the direction of the Marquis Caguiola, a Milanese nobleman who appears to me the first architect of our time; and as he is in favour with the Austrian General, I have some hopes that the works commenced by him will be continued.

After all, amongst all the cities of Italy there is

nothing so ruined as the national character, and perhaps still more in the upper than the lower classes ; and as the first impulse towards improvement must in all countries begin with the former, there is little hope of speedy regeneration. We left Lord and Lady Douglas at Milan, going to Florence, where we are likely to see them again. She was better than in London, and amused with her journey, though not strong enough to see all she wished.

Pray let me hear from you, and know how you and yours do. My little boy makes a very tolerable traveller.

Believe me ever yours most sincerely,

LANSDOWNE.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

At the Tremblay,[1] October 14, 1816.

We arrived here last night, and ran more risks in the last two hours than in all our travels. We came by Rambouillet to see the château, and missed turning off soon enough, so were obliged to do so by a road through which nothing but a miracle could have got us. We found the warmest reception possible, and this morning have been walking over part of the place, which is beautiful, and would be so in England. It is the very best style possible, no gimcracks or nonsense. The château very large and comfortable, contrary to all my ideas of a foreign country-house.

The views from it and the country lovely, and in my opinion far prettier than any we have seen. There is

[1] The seat of the Marquis de Verac.

such variety of ground and so much wood. It has much more than answered my expectations and the anxiety I had to see it, though at the very worst season, for in spring and summer it must be a nest of flowers. Madame de Verac's *appartement*, laid out by him, not the least fine but in excellent taste, and the whole would be perfection if we had not got that prince of bores, the Prince de Poix, Madame de Verac's uncle. We are a family party. Themselves, Madame Alfred[1] (our daughter) and her little girl, Alexis de Noailles (who is cut out of the Chambers this time by his youth), Mdlle. Coste, and myself and Fanny. I would give something you could be here, you would, I am sure, think it a remarkably comfortable society. We went along the levée, a famous embankment, to Amboise (and indeed the whole way to Blois) where we stopped, and saw in a vile fog and rain the Château d'Amboise and Chanteloup. A very fine house still. It now belongs to Chaptal the chemist, or did a little while ago, who manufactures sugar from beet still in the neighbourhood. We proceeded to Blois and saw the château there, and the house where Marie de Medecis was confined. The view on each bank of the Loire to Blois very pretty, and for a long time a rock covered with vine and houses, many cut in the rock, which has a most singular appearance.

[1] Madame Alfred de Noailles, a most accomplished woman, and for many years one of the chiefs of Parisian fashion. Lady M. calls her her 'daughter,' because in 1793, during the reign of terror, she was brought over when a baby by some French fishermen to Brighton. To those poor and faithful men, her mother, then flying for her life, had consigned her child, with directions to entrust it to the first person in England who would take charge of it. This happened to be Lord Malmesbury, who was walking on the beach. The mother soon after escaped and claimed it.

I believe you have passed all this. Road from Blois to Orleans ugly, and the cathedral not worth the *détour*, for our short road was by Chartres.

I hope to get my letters to-morrow from Paris. I did not know the post town of this place, but we are not ten leagues from it. There are various readings about the dissolution. It is certainly a singular destiny that a second Corsican[1] should have at least one rein in his hand again. If any disturbances ever arise here again it must be from the focus of Paris and its environs, for certainly nothing can be calmer than all the more distant parts of the kingdom.

Canning is at Paris, and people think he is come over to look about him. The Duchesse de Berri gives no hopes of an heir as yet, nor I suppose the Princess Charlotte, but the first newspaper I have seen for a fortnight is to-day. There is nobody at Paris, and it is a great expense being there for nothing. I find by letters of Alexis de Noailles (who returned from Paris yesterday) that parties run higher and are more divided than ever, and that this dissolution is not at all likely to answer in any respect, as the majority will be all in their favour, and the step universally unpopular. The use made of the King's name openly in all the elections is so totally contrary to the system of a constitutional government, that it must place him just upon the footing of the minister with whom he stands or falls. Every day's experience proves how impolitic it is to have this new form of government in France, and with time I feel sure it might have been easily brought

[1] Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian Ambassador, who had great influence over the Duc de Richelieu.

back in most respects to a simple monarchy; but this perpetual alteration, botching, and mending will delay the period, and probably make the interval much more full of disastrous effects. On the whole things have gone backward since last year. The old Duchesse de Duras is here, she is like a man in woman's clothes, and strong both in body and mind. Never having quitted France at all, imprisoned for years, for six months under hourly expectation of death, and having gone through such scenes as make one's blood run cold, her father, mother, sister-in-law, &c., all perished by the executioner, she is alive and stout at seventy-two. She is sister to the Prince de Poix and the Vicomte de Noailles, and took charge of Madame de B. and her brother after the death of their mother on the scaffold. Remarkably pious and good, but the most extraordinary figure possible as to dress. She breakfasts by herself at eight o'clock, and dines with the children at one or two o'clock.

Madame Alfred (her daughter) is vastly more agreeable here than at Paris, as her great defect is coquetry. She is really a gifted person, and draws quite beautifully without ever learning. I have got a little drawing for you. Her little girl is very nice and pretty.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Au Château de Tremblay, October 18, 1816.

I lost all patience, and sent off my servant to Paris yesterday after the letters, and it appears my former ones never were delivered. I received two from you of the 3rd and 10th.

I do not think I shall ask for my audience this time

of the King, I find he is entirely in the hands of the Caze and a sister of Caze, who goes and passes hours with him. Caze is, in fact, the Government, the Duc de Richelieu nonentity, and all he is is Russian and what Pozzo chooses he should be. Somebody christened him Le Duc de *Richeloff*. Olivier, who is devoted to him, is enthusiastic about this dissolution, but this is by no means a general opinion. O—— admits that there will be a strong minority and indeed very universally the old members have been re-elected. My idea is, that the club foot is behind the curtain and that Caze is his agent, and the whole worked up to effect the very thing they intended to avoid by this dissolution, the dismissal of the present ministry, and then out peeps the man behind the curtain in their place. The result of all I hear and see and understand is that the country in a mass is quietly and well disposed, that the focus of Paris is alone in a fermentation by the acids and alkalis of the Tuileries; but the fatal thing is the entire want of religion everywhere and the total apathy of the ministers on this subject, not taking any means to re-establish it, and without that, nothing can ever be permanently or solidly right in any country.

Fowler's book is admirable in many points. A dunghill produces the finest fruit. Chateauneuf's full of truths also, but he is a *boute feu* and an ambitious man. I hope, however, that the whole is in such a state as to secure peace and quiet to Europe for some years at least. I send this letter by a private hand to Paris to go in the ambassador's bag. I don't know yet where I shall be lodged. Canning and C. Ellis occupy the whole hotel where I used to go. I am

exceedingly affronted at being compared to C—— as a financier. You might have mentioned Colbert instead I think.

My sister left Geneva for Genoa on Oct. 7. The banditti were all taken and put to death, and gendarmes placed on the road, so they are safer than before.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Hôtel de Nelson, Rue Neuve St. Augustin, October 28, 1816.

The violence of party, or rather opinions, is, as I hear from everybody, beyond what it has ever been, and indeed the open and strong part the King takes against the Royalists appears most extraordinary.

Caze is the entire ruler of France, and is placing by degrees in every department and place revolutionary people of all descriptions. He is making up the whole to be ready against the King's death to strike a fresh blow, and is evidently the right hand of all those who though out of sight are not out of mind. He has not, however, succeeded in the elections, as even the admirers of the present system admit that the minority will be so near a majority, that it will probably soon become so, and then the ministers must equally go with aggravated disgrace.

Indeed they apprehend (as I found from Olivier) that an impeachment may be brought forward against them for making use of the King's name and will in the indecent manner they did at all the elections. I am persuaded that the King is now acting under persuasion and against his own original wishes and good sense. Indeed his asking eight days to consider about the

dissolution proved this. He has no idea of his own strength, and they purposely keep him in ignorance of it to mould him to their purposes. The Duc de Richelieu is quite a cypher and sunk into contempt, and indeed Caze figures as the prime-minister, for he keeps an open house and does the honours of the Court and country to French and foreigners, and the duke never gives a crust of bread to anybody. I do not intend seeing the King this time, although if he could be imbued with the certainty I could give him of his own personal power in at least half of his kingdom it might be of real service, but he is so easily led that all the impression I made would disappear with me.

It is really vexatious to see the public tranquillity of all Europe likely to be disturbed again by a set of wretches when the state of the country itself is favourable to peace and prosperity.

I saw Robert Fagel yesterday, apparently much out of spirits, he is going soon to Cambray and Brussels. Nothing can be worse than the conduct of his King, keeping and giving the best reception to the Jacobins. Cambacérès for example, who is settled there. Robert says that Nagel is quite right on this head and very much against it.

LADY MALMESBURY TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Paris, October 30, 1816.

We had a magnificent ball at our Ambassador's. Yesterday it poured all day. We went to see Mademoiselle Mars in the evening. I shall have a visit from Canning this morning. Nothing can be doing

worse than the King and his ministers just now; the latter have failed in their point about the majority, which, though perhaps fatal to them, is probably a fortunate circumstance for France, for Caze's game is as deep and yet as evident as possible. He has entirely gained the King, who sees only by *his* eyes; and, audacious as it may appear, his sister Madame de P—— is fast succeeding to Madame de Balbi's place. To give you a proof of his infatuation, a little while ago Caze's father, a low man of the Bordelais, came here and was presented to the King in public. He said, 'qu'il désirait remercier S. M. pour toutes les bontés qu'il avait pour ses enfans.' 'Dites les miens (replied the King), et c'est moi qui dois vous remercier de m'avoir donné d'aussi fidèles serviteurs, d'aussi excellens sujets.' This was before 300 people.

The old gentleman was quite *ébahi*, and said to a person who was present and told me, '*Je trouve cela bien fort pour un roi.*' The Duc de Richelieu is sunk into perfect insignificance, and is at the bidding of Pozzo and Caze. There is a general alarm and a well grounded one as to the very apparent schemes of the latter. In all the elections the King's name was used as bribe and menace openly and in the most indecent manner to bring in *Constitutionalists*, and in some cases Jacobins of 1793. By degrees they are removing everywhere from their offices the Royalists and replacing them with these men, and have persuaded the King that he has no power but through them. It is not difficult to perceive Caze's game; he means to reign with the King, but at *his* death, as he would certainly be dethroned, to have all the machine mounted and primed so as to be ready

to bring in either the Duke of Orleans or little Nap or some one *not* the princes, and throw all France and consequently Europe again into confusion. Olivier is under the strongest delusion, but yet he admits that this measure of dissolution was a rash one and has failed.

Much must and will depend on the part we take. They are working like slaves at Canning. I shall tell him the exact truth of all I know and have seen with my eyes and heard with my ears. One thing is certain, that depending upon your enemies and rogues for support can never be good morality or policy. The Chambers certainly meet on Monday.

I should not be surprised if the first act was impeaching the Ministers for their conduct at the elections in making use of the King's name. Had the King sent for half a dozen of the too-zealous Royalists to his cabinet, and dictated his wishes and interest to them, all would have been well, but now he has irritated his friends and never can gain his enemies. The Duke of Cambridge is just his old self and as kind and good-natured as possible to me.

1817.

MAJOR G. BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cambray, January 9, 1817.

I BELIEVE that you have gained a loss by my laziness in not writing before this, as my adventures have been neither new nor rare. I remained here till the 24th, and then took a trip as far as Brussels; where I passed a very pleasant ten days with the Richmonds.

That town is flourishing from the residence of the Court, which is nevertheless far from popular, especially amongst the *Bourgeois*, who take every occasion of showing their ill will, and lately insulted the Prince of Orange in the coolest way imaginable by sending him word that he was not properly dressed at a ball they give once a fortnight, and at which breeches are preferred to pantaloons. This, though trifling in itself, marks very clearly the temper of the place.

He (the Prince) is looking well and fatter than formerly, and certainly if laughing and dancing be a proof of happiness, no man can dispute his title to it. He enquired very much for Lord Malmesbury and all your family. The Princess has very ill health, and very seldom makes her appearance. She is to be confined very shortly. From what I saw of the Belgian army, I should infer that they have made but small

progress during the last twelve months, the garrison of Brussels being without exception the dirtiest-looking dogs I ever saw. The place is full of English and French (exiles). Amongst the latter I saw that old rascal David the painter, who looks to the full as great a villain as he has proved himself to be. Two ci-devant aides-de-camp of Napoleon's, Dessaix and Turenne, are also there. With the former I was to have gone to revisit Waterloo, and as he was in the action with his late chief I should have enjoyed it extremely, but our party being rather a large one, his heart failed him. Les Flamands make bitter complaints of the taxes and contributions which are exacted to pay the Dutch debt, which they contend that Belgium ought not to be burdened with.

This and the residence of the Court has nearly doubled the price of the necessaries of life within the last two years.

I returned to this delightful town on the 4th, and shall now possibly not stir for some considerable time, unless we are relieved by a brigade from England, which I am afraid there is a possibility of, and which would be one of the last things in the world I should wish for.

After considerable struggles I have just made up my mind to have nothing more to do with purchasing at any price, and am now going to let anyone that chooses go over my head. The fact is that the two or three senior lieutenants having just made an offer of raising a sum of money to make up the difference between what I have offered, and the person who wishes to sell has asked, I do not think after so handsome an offer

on their parts that I should be justified in longer interfering with the promotion of the regiment. Indeed, all my prospects in the army are now so entirely at an end, and there is so little probability (I might say possibility) of my ever rising to any rank worth holding, that whether I remain for the rest of my life a major or a lieutenant-colonel is a matter of perfect indifference. What I shall do if we are ordered to England I hardly know. I should much prefer the most unhealthy of the West Indian Islands, to spunging on my friends for the rest of my life, which seems to be the fate in store for me.

COMMODORE BOWLES TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Rio de Janeiro, March 27, 1817.
Received June 10.

South American affairs are becoming more perplexed and serious than ever. In the middle of all the preparations making here for the coronation of the 'King of Portugal and Brazil' on the 6th of next month, intelligence has been received of an actual insurrection at Pernambuco on the 6th inst., which after a short and feeble contest terminated in the deposition and expulsion of all the Portuguese authorities, the establishment of a new Government and a new flag, and a declaration of absolute independence.

It is so strongly suspected that the whole of the northern provinces (that is to say Maranham and Bahia with their dependencies) are implicated in this conspiracy, that the greatest alarm has arisen, and the danger is increased by the whole disposable force of

the country being so completely entangled in the expedition against the Eastern bank of the Plata, that no troops are at hand to stop the progress of the insurrection, which may break out even here to-morrow for anything we know to the contrary. The Condé de Barca, the present Minister of Foreign Affairs, War, Marine, Finance, &c., is the person who has thus brought his master to the brink of ruin, while he was promising to emancipate him from the *tutelle d'Angleterre* and create him Emperor of the West.

If reports we hear may be credited, the disaffection in Portugal equals that which prevails here, and the House of Braganza seems to have a fair chance of losing its possessions in both hemispheres, at the very moment it was abandoning itself to the most unjustifiable and extravagant projects of ambition and aggrandisement. Buonaparte himself never acted with more perfidious want of faith than this Court has shown in its invasion of the Spanish dominions on the left bank of the Plata; and much as I regret revolutions, it will be scarcely possible to regret misfortunes which have been occasioned by such a want of common honour and honesty. I am happy to say no injury has been sustained by the English residents at Pernambuco during the late revolution; their property was most strictly respected, and the British arms placed over the Consul's door having been defaced during the tumult, the first act of the new Government was to request permission to restore and repaint them at their own expense. As the protection of all our factories on this coast necessarily falls on me, it is very pleasant to see

that their dangers are fewer than might be apprehended in such turbulent times.

Perhaps it may be thought necessary to send out more ships and an officer of higher rank, in which case I shall probably be permitted to return to England sooner than seems otherwise likely at present. I have written so much on the affairs of this country, as to have left myself no room for other subjects.

We have accounts from England to the end of January, and I am very happy to see that the winter was well got through so far, with less disposition to tumult or outrage than was apprehended. Cobbett and Hunt, with the worst possible intentions, seem capable of producing little serious mischief, and that little is rendered smaller by their want of plan and union. The efforts made by the higher classes to relieve the poor, at a time when they were themselves so little able to afford additional expenses, must have proved to the lower orders who were their real friends, and I have, I own, too much confidence in the good sense of a great mass of the community, to dread any very serious evil from these endeavours to excite disaffection.

LORD MANSFIELD TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Paris, March 30, 1817.

My dear Lord,—As Lady Catherine told me that *she* was to leave London on the 28th, I address my letter to you, with the hope of affording you some amusement.

The session is closed, and on almost every occasion the Ministers have had a very considerable majority; their budget was agreed to, with the exception of the

sum proposed by the War Minister; the Ultras on that question voted with the Ministers in support of the original sum, and were in the minority. There is but one way of explaining this paradox: there is a strong party amongst the persons attached to the Ministers, and probably encouraged by some of the Cabinet, who have a decided animosity against the Duc de Feltre, whom, on the other hand, the Royalists prefer to any of the revolutionary characters and not without reason, for he accepted the office of Minister at War when the army had begun to show disaffection, and followed the King in defiance of the threats of Buonaparte, which were all the more formidable as they were directed against his family, who had not effected their escape. Many, therefore, of the adherents of Ministers must have voted against them from enmity to Clarke, and prevailed against the Ultras, who from personal regard for Clarke had consented for that time to vote with the administration. In the House of Peers a violent attack on Clarke was made by Marmont, who is a supporter of Ministers. Clarke defended himself with ability, giving a detailed statement of his conduct. Those Peers whom I saw being Ultras, complained much of Marmont's violence, and of course considered that Clarke had been very unjustly accused and unworthily treated; this seemed also to be the opinion of Victor, Duc de Belluno, with whom I am not acquainted, but whom I heard detailing the debate; he is one of the marshals upon whose loyalty the Court have the greatest dependence. You will see another account, I dare say, in the English papers. Mr. Darby, who writes for the 'Courier' with the signature of D., is not to be depended upon

for accuracy, not always from defect of information, but from a strong bias in favour of the present Ministers, and as I am inclined to believe that Clarke's greatest enemies are amongst the Ministers, the statements impeaching him may be considered as very suspicious. A pamphlet was published lately, 'La France et la Coalition' (I believe it was called), written by a young half-pay officer, abusing the allies and inviting the people of France to renew the Sicilian Vespers. It was suppressed in a few days, but it appeared to me that sufficient time had been given to dispose of the copies, of which 500 were sold; and in truth, though the proposal might be absurd, the principle is not repugnant to the feelings of any class of Frenchmen. The Jacobins affect to say that the Royalists were the most pleased with the book. I have read another suppressed pamphlet, which is curious: it is the account of a peasant named Martin, to whom when he was working in the fields the Angel Raphael appeared, telling him that he was to go to court, that he was to see the King, and was to give him some very important advice by which France would be saved from destruction; that when admitted to see the King, he would speak from inspiration, that he would prove the authenticity of his message by revealing circumstances which were *only* known to the King. Martin naturally asked the angel why he did not go himself; his answer was, that to humble the pride of the present generation he chose a lowly peasant to be the instrument of the divine will. He was examined by the curé, then by the mayor of the town, who thought the matter of sufficient consequence to be reported to the Minister of Police, who ordered him to

be examined by physicians, and they, after consultation and after diligent enquiry as to his health and former habits, reported that he was not *insane*. The Minister sent for him to Paris, placed him under the care of a gendarme who never quitted him; he was again examined by physicians; his manner was always quiet, his conversation rational on other subjects, consistent upon this, 'that he had been told that he was to go to Paris, that he was to see the King, and that, though this was very extraordinary, he was convinced that it would happen, and that afterwards the angel would cease to appear. The angel appeared to him after at Paris informing him of some circumstances which afterwards took place, particularly as to a conversation which was to be told in a foreign language, and which took place in English, which he did not understand. At last he was admitted to see the King, and the conversation is[1] . . . stated; the advice was generally as to the restoration of religion and the observance of Sundays; he revealed circumstances to the King which the King never had confided to any person, and which he will not even now disclose.' Martin having completed his mission returned to the country; the interview took place in the course of last week. The pamphlet has been suppressed, but as the author has not been tried, I do not know upon what grounds it is objectionable. The fact of Martin's interview does not seem to be doubted, but the King's conversation as related is simple and weak, and I suppose the author will be accused of having written a book which has a tendency to diminish the respect due to the Sovereign. A more important topic has, however, engrossed the attention of Paris for the last week. On

[1] Word illegible.

Saturday the tragedy of 'Germanicus,' which had been announced once before, was acted at the Français. It was written by M. Amant, had been offered to the theatre eight years ago, but objected to by Buonaparte. M. Amant is one of the proscribed, and his friends thought that if 'Germanicus' were acted it would be so agreeable to the public as to intercede for the author, and facilitate his recall. The King read the play and, finding no objectionable passages, authorised the representation; Monsieur strongly objected to it because there was so strong a party in favour of the *author*. The avenues of the theatre were crowded by three o'clock. One of the actresses, a Royalist, who came up to the door in her carriage, was insulted and her coachman beaten; some say that the coachman struck some of the people with his whip; she thinks it more interesting to say they attacked her because she was a Royalist. After the doors were opened they rushed into the theatre, where it is said that Talma and Mdlle. Mars had introduced about thirty Buonapartists.

The Buonapartists were determined to support the *author*, the Royalists to differ with them in opinion, but the play (the merit of which is doubtful) was received with pretty general applause. When it was concluded there was a call for the author; it was well known who he was and that he was in exile. Then the riot began, and a regular battle with heavy sticks and some swords; the Gensdarmes came in and were repulsed, were reinforced, took possession of the stage, and as I heard loaded their pieces. Talma came forward to say that the author desired to *garder l'anonyme*, and at last the riot was appeased within the theatre. On Sunday there were

three or four duels, but nobody killed; many officers were put under arrest.

On Monday 'Germanicus' was again announced, and in the morning the Gardes du Corps off duty and all the young men attached to the Court wore a knot of white ribbon at their button-hole that they might recognise each other at the theatre, they were also armed with sticks, and as they were walking in the gardens of the Tuileries and Palais Royal it was easy to see from their manner what would take place; the Buonapartists had no sign and were not so visible, but not less determined. In the course of the day 'Germanicus' was withdrawn for *ever*, an order from the police prohibited canes or swords to be taken into the parterre of any of the theatres, the white ribbons disappeared and all appeared to be quiet; but this circumstance, apparently trifling, is of more importance than any event which has occurred since I have been in France. There has been of late less asperity between parties, that is between Buonapartists and Royalists, both of whom seemed to be disposed to coalesce as Constitutionalists.

The Ultras are in the minority and gradually sinking in public opinion, but this has detected the latent spirit of disaffection; and when you consider that the rioters are not the common people but half-pay officers who have been advanced by their courage and talent, you may imagine how formidable they can be if they should be driven to take up arms; there are about 20,000 of them *demi solde* in France, about 1,300 in Paris. The Royalists conceive that they have triumphed because the play was suppressed; the others are inclined to think that the measure was dictated by apprehension of their

numbers; duels and arrests are still taking place, and nobody can say that more serious conflicts will not take place. The conduct of Ministers has not been judicious or decided; everybody in Paris knew that there was to be a riot on Saturday as much as if it had been announced in the play-bills; thousands were waiting in the Boulevard to hear the result. It would have been more prudent to have withdrawn the piece, because it is much better to prevent a riot than to permit it with the hope of keeping it under control; but as the King permitted the representation, as the Ministers had agreed to it as thinking that it would show that the King had no fear, they should have been more decided in their conduct on Saturday and repeated the play on Monday. It was better to withdraw it if they did not mean to act with vigour, but it certainly leaves an impression of their weakness which will not be easily removed, as Caze was always supposed to be a determined man.

Some accuse him of having fermented the discord and encouraged the young Royalists to violence to make them unpopular, and particularly the Gardes du Corps.

The Duke of Wellington was asked by Madame de Staël if he would go to the play; he said 'certainly not,' for that a riot was expected, and that it was his duty to avoid it; she told him that he ought to go, for he would see an extraordinary display of public opinion. With us the audience express their satisfaction or their discontent with regard to the actors or the piece, but they never enquire much into their politics; *here* applause or censure is bestowed on the *author* not on his *work*, and on an actor's principles as much as on his acting. Talma and Mdlle. Mars are great Buonapartists,

M. Bourgoin is a Royalist and refused to act during the cent jours ; he was violently hissed on Saturday. The police is unusually active, and all is quiet, but the display of party-spirit proves that there is a truce but not peace between the different factions. I think I perceive an affectation in the manner of wearing the Legion of Honour ; the ribbon is the same as that of St. Louis, the badge is different, emigrés and Royalists have frequently both, the Buonapartists of course only the Legion, and within these few days it strikes me that they show the badge, which they were not used to do. The Royalists also wear the Lys, a plain white ribbon at the button-hole ; it is scarcely an Order, but was called a decoration and given even to servants ; it was not much worn by people of rank and never alone. Yesterday I saw a *Duc* and *Pair* wearing it singly, and several officers wearing the ribbon instead of a red ribbon of St. Louis with a white edge. These distinctions are almost as bad as different cockades. A Belgian has been arrested, and two or three more of the most violent Buonapartists, and it is said that he is accused of correspondence with some of the exiles. A son of Amant's attacked an old M. Mortanville in a coffee-house and beat him for having written a critique on 'Germanicus ;' he will probably be tried for the assault.

People in England will have difficulty in believing that the fate of a play can connect itself so much with the affairs of the nation ; but I thought that you would be amused with the details of this political event.

March 31.

The manuscript sent from St. Helena was fabricated here ; the police, it is said, know the author. There

is a great mistake in it respecting Macdonald, who had been appointed marshal six months before the action took place in which he is said to have distinguished himself in the hope of obtaining that rank.

The book is ascribed to Marmont, to Madame de Staël, and to Benjamin Constant. The last is probable. Madame de Staël, though rather better, is not likely to recover, and to close my *newspapers*, the Duc de Laval is dead, and Lady E. Stuart has a daughter.[1]

My dear Lord—faithfully yours,

MANSFIELD.

COMMODORE BOWLES TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Buenos Ayres, May 26, 1817.
Received H. C. August 18.

Many thanks for your friendly congratulations. I have been fortunate enough to keep clear of all disputes and altercations with these revolutionary Governments, and I hope have succeeded in some degree in preserving our influence and popularity here, by a conciliatory line of conduct, and by contradicting and refuting the falsehoods and misrepresentations of our enemies and rivals, when they try to raise suspicions of our good faith and pacific intentions.

How this struggle will finally terminate, I will not pretend to prophesy, but I am very much mistaken indeed if Spain ever recovers her dominion in this part, at least, of her South American Colonies.

[1] This daughter afterwards married Lord Canning, and by her conduct and courage assisted her husband in no slight degree in facing the storm of the Indian rebellion. None who knew her will ever forget her exalted character and remarkable beauty. She died of fever in India in 1861, and Lord Canning in the following year. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

A new generation is now rising up who have been educated in utter hostility to her name and government, while those who from habit and old connections would some years ago have supported any reasonable terms of accommodation with the mother country, are according to the common course of nature daily giving way to younger and more aspiring successors. I heartily wish for my own sake, but much more for that of humanity, some means could be devised for terminating hostilities, which if they continue and extend, as the insurrection at Pernambuco gives us but too much reason to fear they will, may end in the expulsion of all whites from this continent, and the establishment of a second St. Domingo in the Brazilian territories. I am aware of the serious difficulties which oppose our interference, but I confess I do not think them insurmountable, and I am sure as far as our interest is concerned, we should be amply repaid for our trouble, and that our commerce to this country, where we are very firmly established, and our manufactures much preferred, would compensate for the diminished demands of other nations.

MAJOR BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Cambray, June 30, 1817.
Received July 6.

It must be confessed that our correspondence has slumbered a little of late, but I trust you do not measure my regards either by the frequency or the brilliancy of my letters.

Here we have had some of the hottest weather I almost ever felt. If it continues, we may expect an

early, and I hope a good harvest, which, God knows, is wanted on this as well as on your side the water. The numbers of poor wretches who are all but starving has increased lately beyond belief, all the inhabitants agree in saying they never recollect so much misery. A good harvest will set things to rights again, but the consequences of a bad one either here or in England, would probably be rebellion. I am very sorry Watson and his gang have got off so triumphantly, and I cannot but think, with all due deference to the Attorney and Solicitor-General, that they bungled the business completely. Castles was really too notorious a villain to bring forward as a principal witness, and had he been tried with the rest it might have been better.

However, some of these Yorkshire heroes can hardly escape; they seem to be imitating their Irish brethren very successfully. We are now paying the tax for the immense sums which commerce and manufactories enabled us to raise during the last twenty years by having a rebellious population.

I rejoice to see that at last some little encouragement is to be given to the Yeomanry Cavalry, on whose good conduct much must depend if actual rebellion is attempted, but of this I trust there is but little chance. The spirit of insurrection seems to have complete possesion of the new world as well as the old. I have letters from the Commodore[1] to April 8. He now begins to think the revolutionary party at Buenos Ayres will succeed. The late destruction of the Arsenal at Cadiz must prove of material service to them, and was

[1] Commodore Bowles, his brother, commanding on the South American Station.

no doubt the work of some of their partisans. Whether this may eventually be a good or a bad thing for England time only can show, but it must open a wide field for commercial speculation; and to judge from the numerous arrivals from that country which are announced every day in the papers, I should suppose the trade at present must be considerable.

You will see by the 'Gazette' that the brevet was of no advantage to me, and only gave me the pleasure of seeing a junior officer or two put over my head. We go on here much as usual. Cricket forms almost the only out of doors amusement we can boast of.

LORD MANSFIELD TO LADY C. HARRIS.

Paris, November 17, 1817.

I am very much obliged to you for having given me some details of the melancholy event which has taken place in England. It will be very difficult in this, as in every other case, to ascertain the facts, and I think we should always reluctantly admit that there has been either negligence or unskilfulness in the medical attendants. In the general disappointment, however, they are the readiest objects of censure. I am assured that Lord Foley some months since declared he knew that Princess Charlotte never would have a child born alive, and that he founded his conviction upon an opinion given to him by a medical man who had attended her.

If there was any ground for apprehension, it seems odd that Sims should not have been in the house, as five hours were lost in sending for him. There was a difference of opinion between him and Dr. Croft as

I hear, and there is one danger which persons of a high rank are exposed to, and which never enters into calculation, the excessive attention to the interests which are involved in their fate, and which prevents the physician from resorting to those bold measures which in a common case they would not scruple to employ.

The consternation could not be so general here, but it was as strongly marked. The newspaper had just come in bringing the favourable bulletin, when the fatal news came by telegraph to the Duc de Richelieu, who immediately went to Sir Charles Stuart. It was so unexpected that people would scarcely believe it, and when assured of its truth there never could be seen more genuine marks of sincere grief.

The English have scarcely been seen since the event; few were prepared with mourning, but they abstained from the theatres and other public places, and you might have known an Englishman by his look of sorrow and depression as much as from his dress or national features.

If princes could be brought to believe the political influence of moral and religious conduct, they might perhaps afford us more frequent examples. Though the extent of the misfortune was felt unequally according to the difference of opinion, the impression that this unfortunate pair had exhibited a bright and rare instance of attention to moral and religious duties and of connubial happiness which was now fatally annihilated, was universal and the greatest aggravation of sorrow.

For my own part I am not disposed to say that it must be a great national calamity. Had we had the disposition of events, we should have disposed them

otherwise. Should we have done better? Better or worse might have happened. Neither the reign of a queen or a long minority would have been desirable, and I am willing to view the event as a distant and problematical national calamity, and to treat it as one which regarded individuals in whose prosperity we took the warmest interest. The Queen's going to Bath was unlucky, though she would not have been at Claremont. The Prince of Wales' going to Suffolk more extraordinary, as he could with perfect convenience have taken any other time. Had the event been favourable, few would have commented on it, but it would not have been less remarkable.

He will never understand how extraordinary his conduct was, for kings have not the same feelings as other people. He would be strongly affected by his daughter's death, but the feeling will not be of long duration; it may revive, however, when he sees that what he considered an object of some jealousy, was in fact a tie between him and his people.

I am in great apprehension for the Queen, and should think her death a very great misfortune. Her life is a bar to the introduction of a thorough contempt for all order and decency at court which must extend itself to society. The King of France did not show any feeling, Madame was, I believe, much affected. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were to have a great dinner and party, which they put off. They had lived in great intimacy and were much attached to Princess Charlotte. The Duchess is a most amiable woman, with excellent feelings.

The French papers have expressed themselves very

properly on the event, and in a marked way on the conduct and feelings shown by the English, inculcating the lesson that nothing tends more to distinguish a nation than attachment to a royal family they are *proud to obey*, and the death of any member of it must be a national misfortune.

All that is very well, it answers their object and flatters the English, but as to the fact, they do not exactly know whether it is a national calamity or not; if it is *not* they are indifferent, if it *is* they are ready to rejoice. If any man's opinion of the French appear severe, let those who think so live among them.

We were at the Chamber of Deputies. The King delivered his speech well, and it gave satisfaction to the French, as it held out the hope of a relaxation in the demands of the allies, and of the withdrawing of their armies. I was sorry to hear it. The French groan at the contributions, and pretend that they cannot pay them. There are many reductions of expense which might be made, and they are increasing their army; they have taken in from 1,000 to 1,100 officers lately. Contrast their taxation with that of England and see what a trifle it is.

The demands have been greater than foreseen, chiefly from Prussia. The Duc de Richelieu finding they were so great, gave up the books, declaring the inability of France; this did not satisfy Prussia, and there has been an acrimonious correspondence in which Prince Hardenberg, I am told, threatens that Prussia will obtain her rights by force, adding that even if France suffers as she pretends to do, her distress would be light to that which was caused in Prussia by the French armies.

I do not know how this is to end; if Prussia act in concert with the allies she may make good her demands, not otherwise.

We are always dupes. Prussia will probably favour France. As to withdrawing the armies, the line of fortresses will be in a great state of forwardness next year, but I am convinced that when the allies are withdrawn, in some way or other the peace of Europe will be disturbed, and France active in the disturbance. The Duc d'Angoulême, if one may judge from the newspapers, has been very well received.

He has come round to the King, and they say Madame also. Monsieur and the Duc de Berri remain as they were. If the Duchesse d'Angoulême had children, that might perhaps ensure a quiet succession, but in his position I do not think it will do. He loses the attachment of the Royalists and does not secure the others. Monsieur and the Duc de Berri gain no ground. He was so imprudent as to take the Duchesse hunting, so that his hopes have again been frustrated.

The Chamber of Peers in their address, which is an echo of the speech, express their joy that there should be a prospect of relief from contribution and occupation by the allies, saying that hitherto *la France n'a pas murmuré d'avoir été punie de trop de gloire.* The King of the Netherlands has acted strangely in permitting many who were only to reside in Prussia, Austria, or Russia to remain in Belgium.

These fellows are never idle, and he will find so to his cost. Wilson's book has been translated here, but much curtailed. I saw it in English. Rostopschin told me there were many things completely false, and

I have no doubt that there can be little dependence on his accuracy as to the Russian Campaign; but it is impossible, in my opinion, to entertain too great an apprehension of the growth of Russian power, and particularly as we are concerned, for we are now almost neighbours.

1818.

MAJOR BOWLES (GUARDS) TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Cambray, January 5, 1818.

Some people here are fully persuaded that our withdrawing will be the signal of serious disturbances at Paris, but I own I am not one of this number. The only event which I should expect to produce confusion is the death of the King, and this there does not appear to be much chance of. The Duke of Orleans[1] has been subscribing largely towards some of the exiles at Brussels and elsewhere, who are suffering from prosecutions for libelling the present French Government!

What possible good he can propose to himself from this conduct, seems difficult to guess. He is, of course, *en mauvaise odeur* at the Tuileries, and this gives rise to a number of stories. If the whole of France is recovering from the effects of war as rapidly as this part of the country, they have certainly no reason to complain. I fear they will be ready for war again long before any other nation in Europe, and if such a *hero!* as the Duc de Berri was by chance to be at the head of affairs, I should not be very much surprised at some mad attempt to recover Belgium, the loss of which it will take *la grande nation* a long time to digest. The

[1] Afterwards King Louis-Philippe.

conduct of the heir-apparent of that throne, in the commencement of a late affair at Brussels, seems to have been anything but '*suaviter in modo*,' as he certainly actually refused an interview with the King, who came express from the Hague for the purpose of seeing him. However, my pretending to say anything to you on the subject is not a little presumptuous, as you must be so much better informed than I can be. The general impression here seems to be, that he was right in the *matter*, but not in the *manner*. The line of frontier fortresses, seventeen in number, from *Nieueport* to *Luxembourg* are going on rapidly, and will be sufficiently finished by the end of this year to *walk alone*. They will probably be the finest specimens of fortification in Europe. I hope to be able to make the tour of them in the course of this summer.

LADY FRANCES COLE TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Cambray, February 16, 1818.

We heard from Paris last night some details of the attempt to shoot the Duke of Wellington, which has made a great sensation at Paris, as it has done here, and no doubt will in London also. From this account there appears little doubt that it was the result of a plan which has been forming for some time. The thing itself happened thus. The Duke had had a large dinner of the Corps Diplomatique, after which he went to some evening party, from which as he was returning about half-past twelve a man was seen running alongside of the carriage the length of the street where he lives. This so often happens from curiosity, that the servants thought

little of it, but when the carriage was turning into the *porte-cochère* the man placed himself behind the sentry-box and fired a pistol, intending the ball to enter the carriage in a sloping direction through the side window, by which means he might have hit the Duke had he been leaning back. Agitation or awkwardness, however, made him miss even the carriage, and the ball struck the Hôtel de Crillon on the opposite side of the street. The Duke, the servants, the sentries, all saw the flash and heard the report, but the sentries foolishly had placed themselves within the archway, and the coachman wisely thinking his best plan was to drive as quickly as he could to the door, no one could pursue the man for some minutes. This gave him the advantage, and though they kept him in sight as far as the Rue de la Madeleine (which is the other side of the Rue Faubourg St.-Honoré from the Rue des Champs Élysées, where the Duke lives), they there lost sight of him, and only found a double-barrelled pocket pistol, which he must have had in reserve as both barrels were loaded. The French Government are (as Comte Michel Woronzow says) *sincerely anxious* to apprehend the man, and are sanguine on the subject. Meantime, they are willing to throw the blame off the French, and say it is a German, a Hanoverian, a Belgian, and even, I believe, an Englishman.

This, however, is very improbable, and the truth most likely is that it is one of the *demi solde*. The Duke, it seems, has been warned that a plot was forming against his life ever since the beginning of this year, the first time by an anonymous letter, which was addressed to his aide-de-camp Sir Ulysses Burgh, but this

being anonymous he was not disposed to give any attention to it. Since the attempt was made, a servant living in the Spanish Ambassador's family at Paris, and who had once lived with Sir Ulysses Burgh, has come forward and acknowledged himself the author of this letter; that he was induced to write it by a person coming to him about the first days of the year, and asking him if he recollected him? to which, on his replying in the negative, the man told him he had known him when a servant to General Excelmans (which he had been), himself serving as a soldier. After various circumlocutions, he ended by telling him he had now an opportunity of making his fortune. That a plot was forming to exterminate the Duke, '*qui était l'ennemi de la gloire française*;' and that if he would undertake the execution of it he would be amply rewarded, in token of which he offered him a purse. The servant, however, withstood all argument and bribery, but had not courage or spirit enough to detain the man immediately, and carry him before the police, but, after waiting a few days, decided on writing a letter to Sir Ulysses. He now says he should know the man were he to meet him, but denies any knowledge of who or what he is, and he is now walking about Paris with a police officer, in order to see and catch him. The second warning the Duke had came in a more creditable style, but so short a time ago as not to leave much time to act upon it. This was a letter from Lord Kinnaird to Sir George Murray, informing him that he had been addressed by a Frenchman (whose name, however, he did not mention) to know whether the Duke was likely to be persuaded to

interest himself with the French Government for a man who had been condemned by a *cour prévôtale.* Lord Kinnaird replied he did not suppose the Duke considered those sort of cases as at all entering into his department, and therefore probably would not. But, said the man, should a person give him such information as would tend to save his life, would that make any impression? Lord Kinnard said such circumstances might alter the case, but that he could not take upon himself to answer for the Duke. Finally, the man, after some further hesitation, declared that he was perfectly acquainted with, and could name, the authors of a plot which was now forming to assassinate the Duke, and would denounce them immediately to Monsieur de Caze, if a safeguard and promise of protection was given to him, he being a *proscrit.* Of course Sir George Murray showed this letter to the Duke, who had it in his pocket when he was fired at. Lord Kinnaird ought to and will, I conclude, now come forward with the *name of the person* who gave him the information, and through all these channels something may be discovered. It seems clear the attempt has not been one of a single wild or thoughtless man, but the result of some organised plan.

I am not surprised at it indeed. I have always felt strongly the Duke's insecurity at Paris, but as these people now say emissaries of this conspiracy have been watching him here and at the château, no place seems really safe for him, and one can only be thankful advantage was not taken of his numberless unguarded walks and rides.

He takes this event in the manner you may suppose; not rejecting any precautions which may in some degree

prevent any future attempt in his own house, but taking his usual rides and showing himself as usual; truly observing that if anyone chose to take his life by sacrificing his own, no precaution can save him, and he would only make his existence miserable by continually considering himself in danger. I have given you all these details because I thought they would interest you, and because Count Woronzow, who told them to us, had them from the Duke and is a likely person to repeat them quite correctly.

REV. A. HARRIS TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Hill Street, 4 o'clock, April 8, 1818.

I have just seen Palmerston after this horrible attempt to assassinate him. He has received a contusion upon the back-bone, but not a severe one, and there is not the *least* reason for alarm.

His escape was a very narrow one. The assassin, whose name is Davis and who had been an officer in Spain, met him upon the staircase at the War Office and was quite close to him when he fired; the ball penetrated his coat and waistcoat about the middle of his spine and glanced off. Palmerston walked on to the room where his secretary was sitting and told him that he had been shot at, but did not know what injury he had received. Astley Cooper and another surgeon of the name of Lynn came immediately and found the flesh upon the back-bone contused, but that the ball had not penetrated the skin.

The ball was found upon the staircase. The surgeons conveyed Palmerston home. Meanwhile the assassin was seized by two messengers and put into safe custody.

Palmerston told me that he knew him to be mad, and for that reason had declined seeing him, having received two letters lately asking him to do so.

He has been in confinement in a madhouse in South Wales, from whence he broke loose. Whilst I was with Palmerston, Mr. Haye, the surgeon who has long attended him and his family, came and examined his back. He said, in confirmation of what A. Cooper had before pronounced, that there was not the *least* cause for apprehension, but that Palmerston must be kept low and not eat meat to-day. In fact the mental agitation upon so dreadful an occasion cannot subside at once.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD MALMESBURY.

Stanhope Street, Wednesday Evening, April 10, 1818.

A thousand thanks for your kind note, which I cannot refrain from answering myself. I am happy to say that I am quite well, and though I feel a little inconvenience from the bruise on my back it is much easier than it was this morning, and after all I am not half so sore as either Don Quixote or Sancho upon many occasions in their adventures.

My surgeon has just been to look at my back and reports progress, and asks leave to come again, but says it is doing extremely well. One comfort is that I shall be recorded in illustrious company as having had the same escape as the Duke of Wellington and the Regent, but I have so far the advantage of the latter that my bullet *has* been found, though luckily *not in me.*

1819.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Stanhope Street, January 31, 1819.

As I find from your sisters that you do not seem to be aware how much your presence would be greeted in the House on Tuesday, I cannot refrain from writing a few lines to say that the Opposition mean to make a great push on that day, that it will be the first great trial of strength between the two great parties in the new Parliament,[1] and that it is obviously of great importance to the Government that the first division should be as favourable as possible. I am sure you will at once see how much depends upon effect in politics as well as in other things, and of what consequence it is to begin the campaign with successful operations.

Pray, therefore, come up, if there is no particular cause to prevent you.

[1] This, the sixth Parliament, met on January 14. The Regent had placed the 58,000*l.*, which lapsed on the decease of the Queen to the Civil List, at the disposal of Parliament. As Her Majesty had been custos of the King's person during his illness, the Government proposed that the Duke of York should succeed her in that office, receiving the same salary of 10,000*l.*

HON. F. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Somerset Place, February 1, 1819.

I know you do not much like to be disturbed in your country retreat, but I cannot forbear letting you know that the Opposition are straining every nerve to collect the most formidable body they can; and their efforts have not been unsuccessful; our situation may become critical unless we can muster a commanding force, and I hope, therefore, you will not be indisposed to give us your help. I fear I am too late to get you up for to-morrow night, although that is one of the most material struggles we shall have, and I am very sorry I did not write to you before, but I was unwilling to trouble you.

MR. ARBUTHNOT[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

(Private.) Downing Street, February 17, 1819.

I am sure you will excuse my troubling you, and I think you will like me to let you know that on Monday next the Opposition mean to invade the Privy Purse if they can. The question is whether the Duke of York shall as Custos have the same grant and in the same manner as the Queen had.

The Duke and the Government would refuse that grant if it were to be paid from the Privy Purse; and hoping that you will see this in the same light, I trust that you may without any material inconvenience be able to attend.

[1] Secretary to the Treasury, and whipper-in for the Government.

HON. F. ROBINSON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Board of Trade, June 3, 1819.

Although I am afraid that there is no great chance of inducing you to come to town again, I cannot forbear writing to you to say that the existence of the present Government depends absolutely upon the votes of Monday next the 7th inst.

The difficulty which on more occasions than one we have experienced this year upon questions of no inconsiderable importance has placed the Government under the necessity of undertaking to stand or fall by the result of the debate on finance on that day;[1] and although I am sanguine enough to hope that the result will be successful, yet we have seen enough of the present House of Commons to know that we stand upon ticklish ground, particularly on all matters connected with the public expenditure; unless, therefore, we can have the support of those whose disposition we know to be friendly we may be driven out by those, who, although they have no positive wish for our removal, are nevertheless not much interested in our continuance. I assure you I would not press you on this matter if I did not feel that the situation of things calls for a vigorous effort; once made, I doubt not its effects will be lasting, but if not made now the ground can never be recovered.

At all events, I hope you will excuse me for writing to you when I knew your intention had been to remain in the country.

[1] The Resolutions founded on the financial scheme of the Government were carried against Mr. Tierney's Amendment, by 329 to 132.

MAJOR BOWLES[1] (GUARDS) TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Quebec, September 1, 1819.
Received November 9.

This must be a short and most melancholy letter. I delayed writing from day to day in order to be able to amuse you with the details of our late tour. Alas how little did I suspect what would be its termination! We left Kingston on our way back to Montreal on the 20th of last month; the female part of the family went down the St. Lawrence, and the Duke of Richmond, Colonel Cockburn and myself went across the country to see some new settlements and to come down the Ottawa. The Duke was then in perfect health and remained so until the 24th, when he first complained of a pain in his shoulder and throat, loss of appetite and weakness.

This increased on the two following days, and on the 26th evident symptoms of hydrophobia[2] appeared, although it was not until the 27th that it was violent. The scene on that day will never be erased from my memory: never did any human being support excruciating agony with more perfect resignation, piety, and fortitude; not a murmur, not a single hasty expression, escaped him. His only anxiety was for his family.

For himself he was ready and even desirous of death; and only hoped it was not presumptuous to pray that his sufferings might be shortened. The strong energies of his mind prevented this dreadful disorder from causing the effects which one has sometimes heard of.

[1] Was military secretary to the Duke of Richmond, Governor of Canada.

[2] The Duke had been bitten by a tame fox a few weeks previously.

Even when from violence of pain his senses wandered, not a sentence nor a wish did he utter which his best friends would not desire to have repeated.

In him I have lost a friend never to be sufficiently regretted; his kindness and goodness to me I never can forget. He always treated me more like a brother than a friend, and his confidence in me was most gratifying. As a private loss it is irreparable, as a public one to Canada almost equally so.

He left this world without a struggle on the morning of the 28th, and Colonel Cockburn and myself arrived with his remains at Montreal on the evening of the 30th, just one day later than had been fixed, and the very one on which he was to have held a levée and attended a ball in the evening!

How awful a lesson for all human calculations! This sad event has made a material change in my plans and prospects.

MR. ARBUTHNOT TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Downing Street, October 11, 1819.

I take the earliest opportunity of apprising you that Parliament is to meet on the 23rd of November. You will readily suppose that the disturbed state of some of the districts has been the cause of this early meeting of Parliament, but I believe I may venture to say that from the unwillingness of Government to call their friends together at this unusual season of the year there would have been a great disposition not to resort to this measure if the Opposition had not in various parts taken up the Manchester question in a mode which

practically throws their weight at the present moment into the scale of treason and reform as against Government and the Constitution. The line which the Opposition have now manifested a determination to take will ensure the attendance of all their supporters, and I need not say how desirable it is that our friends should be influenced by a corresponding feeling. The safety of the country will depend upon the measures which Parliament may now adopt, and nothing can enable the Government to stem the torrent of reform, and of such a reform as would inevitably lead to revolution, but the unanimous and zealous support of its friends.

I am sure that you will not be found wanting upon such an occasion, but you will also do infinite good by using your influence with your friends in the House to induce them to attend. Measures of vital importance will be brought before Parliament immediately upon its meeting, and at a time like the present no one who has a stake in the country would choose to be absent. As we shall be very anxious to know what attendance we are likely to have, you will very much oblige me by letting me know whether those of our friends with whom you communicate are intending to come up for the first day of the session.

I shall be very thankful for any other information which you may be able to give me.

LORD CASTLEREAGH TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Downing Street, October 12, 1819.

The meeting of Parliament for the dispatch of business being fixed for the 23rd November,[1] I take the liberty of very earnestly requesting your Lordship's attendance in the House of Commons on that day, when business of the greatest importance will be immediately brought forward which will render a full attendance particularly desirable.

LORD PALMERSTON TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Stanhope Street, November 1, 1819.

I hope that you will be able to make arrangements for coming up the first day of the session, as I can assure you that it is of importance to do so. This is no ordinary moment, and everything depends not merely upon the cold support of the friends of social order, but upon their displaying a zeal and alacrity in some measure corresponding with the activity of those who are endeavouring to overthrow our institutions. You know as well as I do how much more effect you will produce by showing on the first day, than by slipping in three or four days afterwards, and you also know how much depends upon effect and first impressions in parliamentary matters. As you have three weeks before you, it cannot make much difference whether you arrange to come up three days sooner or three days

[1] Parliament was called in consequence of the riots and seditious meetings in the manufacturing districts.

later, and I am sure you had better take the three days off the end than the beginning of your attendance.

I have no doubt that the Opposition will muster in great force, and we shall probably plunge at once into interesting discussions, and though we may not have a division, yet think how different the effect is which will be produced upon the House and the public by a Government in such a crisis as this sitting with empty or with full benches behind them. The great difficulty which Government have had to contend with since the peace, has been the apparent coldness of its real well-wishers, and if they cannot inspire some feeling of warmth and zeal in a moment like this, they had certainly better give up the reins to the hands of those who may be more fortunate in that respect.

1820.

REV. A. HARRIS TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

February 24, 1820.

I SEND you a copy of Lord Bathurst's note about this atrocious attempt, as I thought you would like to know the truth. I have seen Lady Georgiana since, and heard little more except that the plan seems to have been well arranged, supposing no intimation to have been given. They must have watched Lord Harrowby's house narrowly, where to put persons at the areas and mews' doors so as to prevent the egress of servants when the alarm was once given. When the conspirators had ascertained the Ministers were seated at table, one was to knock at the door as with a message or letter, the rest rush in and murder the porter, meanwhile a grenade or stone was to be thrown into the eating-room window to divert the attention from the noise in the hall, then they were to rush in and murder Ministers and servants.

It does not appear whether they expected any assistance or co-operation from any other parts of the town, but Georgiana said their plans were more extended. They appeared, except Thistlewood, of the lowest description.

It has been remarked that numbers of ill-looking men have been loitering about this part of the town,

some begging, some not. There is something so un-English in it that it makes one shudder.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM LORD BATHURST.

Of their intention to attack us at a Cabinet dinner we had some intimation as far back as the time when we dined at Lord Westmoreland's[1] before Christmas, but the appearance of two police officers put an end to the idea.

The intended attack yesterday was upon a larger scale and well methodised. The information which we had received respecting it, was to a certain extent confirmed by an anonymous letter, and on Tuesday morning a person delivered to Lord Harrowby a letter, which he desired should be immediately given to Lord Castlereagh; it contained a corroboration of all that we had heard.

As it was not certain that the place of rendezvous was finally fixed from whence the party were to proceed to Grosvenor Square, and as we knew that Lord Harrowby's house was watched in order to see if any alarm were taken and preparation made for defence, it was agreed among us that we should keep our own council and not dine there, but the preparations for dinner should go on up to the dinner-hour. They had obtained an exact knowledge of the position of Lord Harrowby's dining-room. Thistlewood was the leader. Nine of them were taken.

[1] He was Privy Seal. The Cabinet Ministers formerly gave Cabinet dinners every week by turns, generally on Wednesdays, and that custom continued until Lord Derby's first administration resigned in December 1852, when it ceased.

The Duke of Wellington, Lord Castlereagh, and Lord Sidmouth were the three they were most determined upon destroying, but all were to have fallen.

COPY OF THE ORDER TO ATTEND THE HOUSE OF LORDS FOR QUEEN CAROLINE'S TRIAL.

To the Earl of Malmesbury :—

My Lord,

I am commanded by The House of Lords to acquaint You that The House expects Your Lordship's Attendance upon the Second Reading of the Bill intituled 'An Act to deprive Her Majesty Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of the Title, Prerogatives, Rights, Privileges, and Exemptions of Queen Consort of This Realm, and to dissolve the Marriage between His Majesty and the said Caroline Amelia Elizabeth,' on Thursday the 17th day of August next at ten o'clock in the forenoon. And that it is the further Order of The House that No Lord shall absent Himself from the Service of the House upon the second Reading of the said Bill, or on any of the subsequent proceedings of the House upon the same, without the Leave of the House, upon pain of incurring the Displeasure of the House.

I am, My Lord,

Your Lordship's Humble Servant.

ELDON C.

House of Lords, July 26, 1820.

P.S.—I am also directed by The House to send Your Lordship the following Resolutions :—

Resolved. That no Lord do absent Himself during the proceedings upon the said Bill on pain of incurring a

fine of One Hundred Pounds for each day's absence, pending the three first days of such Proceedings, and of Fifty Pounds for each subsequent day's Absence from the same; and in default of payment of any and every such Fine of being taken into Custody.

Resolved. That no excuses be admitted save disability from age, viz: being of the Age of 70 years and upwards, or from Sickness, or having been out of the Realm in foreign parts on the 10th of July inst. on which day the Bill was ordered to be read a second time, and continuing out of the same; or being out of Great Britain on His Majesty's Service, or on account of the death of a parent wife or Child.

Resolved. That every Lord absenting Himself on account of Age or Sickness, do address a Letter to The Lord Chancellor, stating upon His Honour that He is so disabled.

LETTER FROM LORD MALMESBURY IN ANSWER.

July 31, 1820.

My Lord,—I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter communicating to me the command to attend the House of Peers on August 17 unless disqualified by age or infirmity. I have, unfortunately, both to allege. I am in my seventy-fifth year, and for the last two or three have been a constant invalid, and entirely unable to perform any of the duties belonging to my situation. This I can assert upon my honour, and have the honour to remain, with great respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's very obedient humble servant,

MALMESBURY.

LORD LANSDOWNE TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

London, September 9, 1820.

Many thanks for your enquiry. I might have had a very bad fall, as I was riding very fast, when a large dog ran between my horse's legs and threw him, but have escaped with some bruises.

We have at length closed the first act of this most distressing, disgusting, and I am afraid (its result, be that what it may) mischievous drama. We adjourned for three weeks or rather more (October 3) this morning, and then Brougham is to open and go through his case, so that you will probably be summoned to town in November. I remember your quotation from Burnet, and wish that others would draw the same moral from it that I am persuaded you do.

LORD PALMERSTON[1] TO LORD FITZHARRIS.

Stanhope Street, November 25, 1820.

I meant to have called on you yesterday, but was prevented. I wished to have done so in order to have asked you whether it would be any satisfaction to you that I should accompany you in the journey[2] you are

[1] Lord Palmerston has so lately been removed from amongst us, that to testify to his well-known genial and generous spirit would be superfluous in the present generation. Yet I could do so amply from my long acquaintance with him in private life. One anecdote of his warm-hearted nature I will record. In 1828 I was lying dangerously wounded at Geneva, from an accident in fencing. Upon hearing of it, Lord Palmerston got on his horse and rode from Broadlands to Heron Court and back (a distance of fifty miles), to enquire of Lord Malmesbury what account he had received of his son.

[2] The funeral of Lord Malmesbury, who died on November 21, in the

about to undertake. If it would, there are many feelings which would lead me to do so. I know you will tell me exactly what you would wish on this point, and whatever you wish shall be done.

Yours most affectionately,

PALMERSTON.

seventy-fifth year of his age. He was buried in the family vault in Salisbury Cathedral, where his sister erected a fine monument, by Chantrey, to his memory.

THE END.

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